Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu ISSN - 0974 - 1739

NHRD Network Journal

October 2011 Volume 4 Issue 4

Gen Y and HR

Chip Espinoza
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Y Radhakrishna Nair
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A Quarterly Publication by The National HRD Network

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NHRD Network Journal

Gen Y and HR

Volume 4 Issue 4 October 2011

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Publisher, Printer, Owner and Place of Publication	**Dhananjay Singh** on behalf of National HRD Network, National HRD Network Secretariat, C 81 C, DLF Super Mart, DLF City, Phase IV, Gurgaon122 002. Tel +91 124 404 1560 e-mail: dhananjay.singh@nationalhrd.org
Printed at	**Nagaraj & Co. Pvt. Ltd.,** 156, Developed Plots Industrial Estate, Perungudi, Chennai 600 096. Tel : 044 - 66149291

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Dear Readers,

The National HRD Network has been bringing out a semi-academic, theme based, quarterly journal for the past four years. It aims at compiling and publishing the professional views and experiences of reputed HR professionals, line professionals, CEOs, researchers, academicians in each theme area. We carry out extensive research, identify and invite persons who have eminent publications or have rich experience in the theme area to contribute articles for each issue. Through the journal, we aim to build a body of HR knowledge in all facets of HR which is not otherwise easily available for the current and future HR Professionals. So far, close to 300 eminent authors have contributed articles for the 20 issues. Each issue is guest edited by a person of eminence in the concerned theme area.

This journal is circulated free to the members of NHRD Network to stimulate their thinking and towards their professional development.

Publications so far have been based on themes such as :

- "IT in HR"
- "Performance Management"
- "Attracting and Retaining Talent"
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- "Learning and Development"
- "Leadership"
- "Work-Life Balance"
- "Institution Building"
- "Coaching For Performance and Development"
- "Human Resources Management in Rapid Growth Organizations"
- "HR Competence"
- "HR and Employee Relations"

The copies of these issues of the journal can be accessed from www.nationalhrd.org.

The current issue (October 2011) is on the theme of "Getting HR Ready for Gen Y"

Plans for the ensuing issues are as follows:

1. January 2012 issue by Mr. Rajeev Dubey, President (Group HR & After-Market); & Member of the Group Executive Board, Mahindra & Mahindra on the theme,"CSR and HR" ;
2. April 2012 issue by Mr. Vivek Paranjpe, Advisor to Chairman, Reliance Industries Limited, "HR Challenges in the Knowledge Economy";
3. July 2012 issue on the theme HR, The Business Driver to be guest edited by Mr. Anand Nayak, Head HR , ITC;
4. October 2012 issue on the theme HR and Internal Communication Practices to be guest edited by Mr. Prince Augustine, EVP-Human Capital, Mahindra and Mahindra;
5. January 2013 issue on the theme HR in a Customer Driven Economy to be guest edited by Mr. Shyam C Raman, Senior VP HR, Murugappa Group;
6. April 2013 issue on the theme HR and Innovation by Prof. KB Akhilesh, Indian Institute of Sciences, Bengaluru.

This is your journal and will be as rich as you want it to be.

In order to further enrich it, we would like to receive your

1. qualitative feedback on issues brought out so far, and
2. suggestions for themes to be covered in our future issues.
3. Any other suggestions.

Kindly send in your thoughts to drpvrmurthyresearch@gmail.com

Dr. PVR Murthy
Managing Editor.

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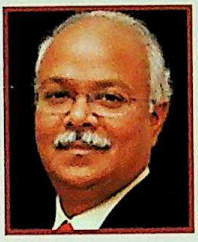
EDITORIAL COMMENTS



Dr. SRIPADA CHANDRASEKHAR
(Guest Editor for this Issue)

VP & Head HR, IBM (India/South Asia)

Dr Chandrasekhar Sripada is a seasoned and experienced (30+years) HR professional. He has worked across the public, private and multi-national sectors in reputed firms in manufacturing and IT, Telecom, consulting and other services domains. He is a certified executive coach and is a well-known writer and speaker.

Stop defining, start acting – Gen Y have no time!

Inviting, reviewing, editing and putting together articles from many thought leaders and accomplished HR practitioners for this issue of the National HRD Journal *has been a very rewarding experience. I got a 'yes' from almost every one I asked and that shows the tremendous interest this topic generates in present times. Given the popularity of the topic of Gen Y all over the world, I had a tough time deciding whom to ask to write and how to build the story line of this journal.*

Before I present the broad content and structure of this issue, let me give you, in summary, what has been my take from what I read. All over the world people are deeply interested in the topic of Gen Y. However they are spending more time defining who is Gen Y – what are generational cohorts (baby boomers, Gen X etc) and what are the peculiar characteristics of Gen Y. One of the major findings is that Gen Y have little patience and they want good things to happen to them fast. So I would plead with practioners to worry less about who Gen Y is or how they are different. Find out all people below the age of 30 (a good thumb rule for next 5 years) and start engaging with them – part giving them purpose and part persuading them to expect less. I have carefully looked for specific practices from the articles we received that can be implemented in our companies immediately and listed them for your benefit at the end of this editorial.

Now on to the structure of this journal and brief preview of what to expect from the subsequent pages.

There are 5 ***distinct perspectives*** *which we have covered in this journal. Here is an overview.*

International view

*We had invited authors from USA, Europe& UK, Australia , China and Africa to write about their perspectives on Gen Y. I am thankful to Chip Espinoza — the co-author of the famous book: "*Managing the Millennials*" to have written a wonderful piece exclusively for this journal. He has presented not just a US view but has taken*

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a 'global' view on this topic. I am delighted to have received personal contributions from Regina Eckert of Centre of Creative Leadership (Brussels) presenting a very thorough review of the perspectives on Gen Y in Europe and pointing out the specific differences between "east' and 'west" Europe. Carina Paine Schofield et al from Ashridge Business School in the UK has sent us a very insightful article on what the missing skills of Gen Y are as seen in UK and a number of new thoughts on Gen Y from the experiences of practitioners both from UK and India. We have got another interesting perspective from from Dr lje Jidemna from Africa (researcher and consultant based in Nigeria) unraveling the complex context for Gen Y in different parts of Africa. We learn from this article that there is no one Africa and the realities for Gen Y are different in different African countries like Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa. We have also got some special insights from Australia and Avril Henry (consultant based in Pyrmount, NSW, Australia) has written a specially insightful piece on this topic. Avril explains how in spite of all the assumptions of rebelliousness, we have of Gen Y, research shows that 89% of them say they find their "parents" opinion very important. We have the Gen Y story of China and publish excerpts from a major study on Gen Y that IBM had commissioned in China and the study explains how Chinese Gen Y are different — due a different set of historical conditions in that country — and how companies based in China are coping with Gen Y.

Thus we have covered most significant perspectives from across all continents on this topic and to that extent this represents a truly 'global cross-section' of present day thoughts on Gen Y and what it implies to us in the HR profession.

Traditional Industry view

In the second section, our plan was to invite leaders from the more traditional , manufacturing type of companies and ask them to write about their views on Gen Y. We got some very progressive thoughts from reputed firms in this sector. Rajeev Dubey from Mahindra group not only explains the aspirational appeal of "Rise"- their new Brand makeover for the Gen Y – he also presents some very successful practices like "Shadow Boards " and "social option plans" to engage with the Gen Y. Radhakrishnan Nair of Tata Steel presents a radically different view and asks organizations and

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Gen X Leaders to "groom' and influence the Gen Y. Radha says we should be concerned with the lack of 'discipline' among Gen Y and recommends specific steps to foster better values among them. B Sudhakar of Tata Chemicals has written about a number of Gen Y friendly practices that the company has introduced. He confesses that there is more to do to prepare the managers of Gen Y in accepting Gen Y and engaging with them effectively. Saumen Chakraborty actually partnered with a Gen Y student at XLRI and has taken a practical look at what the Gen Y want and how can companies deal with those expectations. In this section we also have a very unique write-up by Sreekanth from Britannia telling us how market research models like conjoint analysis and product differentiation strategies can be used by HR to 'market ' HR programs to Gen Y employees internally.

New generation companies with Gen Y workforce

We had specifically reached out to HR and other leaders of such new generation companies in IT and other services businesses where the workforce is pre-dominantly Gen Y. We received a number of articles in this section: Abhijit Bhaduri from WIPRO has discussed the need for different strategies to deal with the changing behaviors of millennials in the tech sector. Prithvi Shergill from Accenture talks about Gen Y as 'generation jumping' and refers to the interesting phenomenon of KIPPERS(Kids in Parents' pockets eroding retirement savings.!)SV Nathan of Deloitte presents a number of mindset shifts we have to make to leverage the Gen Y talent and explains how Deloitte pursues 'mass customization' of careers keeping the unique needs of Gen Y. T Hari of Mahindra Satyam talks about Gen C as the construct that explains the "connected" character of Gen Y and talks of some innovative approaches to build on this new 'connected ' generation. NS Rajan from E&Y argues that managing the expectations of Gen Y is critical and Srihari Udupa and Varun from PwC build a strong case for human capital strategies to factor in the new nimble and talented Gen Y as they plan new engagement models. Dr Ganesh Natarajan from Zensar bemoans the pitiable lack of employability among Gen Yers and recommends the role of finishing schools in bridging the skills gaps. He also outlines the fun culture that has been successfully built at Zensar referring to a Harvard case study written on the experience at Zensar.

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C Mahalingam (Mali) from Symphony Services opines that Gen Y for certain will be very different. In his article he talks about how learning material provided through "You Tube' can be very powerful to engage the Gen Y and points us to some successful examples. V C Gopalratnam from CISCO emphasizes the 'tech' focus of Gen Y and considers freedom to use their 'own' devices is a critical motivator for Gen Y. CISCO, therefore has the 'Bring Your Own Technology' policy. There are some interesting perspectives on this subject from new generation "Services" companies. Rohit Hasteer from Make My trip outlines the Gen Y friendly workplace that Make My Trip has been able to build and Judhajit Das of ICICI Prudential recommends how improving employability is a critical task awaiting HR leaders. On a separate note, Dr R. M Naidu and Dr Meera have written detailed piece on Gen Y and they don't mince words when they say: "Like it or not, Generation Y is your fickle new talent pool". Naidu tells us then how to deal with this "fickle" generation.

Academic view

There is a serious research based contribution from professor Vasanthi Srinvasan of IIM Bangalore, et al explaining the features and challenges of managing a multi-generational workforce. I will recommend you read it carefully and gain by its powerful insights.

Gen Y view

I have a regret that not many Gen Y professionals whom we approached took the time out to write. And those who wrote just turned out autobiographical pieces explaining their personal struggles and opinions without giving us the benefit of a well thought out perspective. I am sure there are many Gen Y thinkers out there with a lot to share. But we couldn't bring them here. I would only attribute it to our editorial inability to have attracted them to write for us. There may be story here on how Gen X (and even older!) editors can attract and engage with Gen Y authors!

However, to make up for the absence of specific Gen Y authors, this journal presents a unique section of Gen Y views gleaned from a blog that IBM ran in India over the last several weeks –specially

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with an aim to present a real-time survey of Gen Y views largely from campuses in India. There are no surprises. The views gathered from the on-line posts of Gen Y students only re-confirms our view that Gen Y want it all. – money, purpose, career, freedom everything together at the same time.(Who doesn't?)

As you finish reading all the articles of this journal you will be struck by the similarity of views on what Gen Y want and also the great consensus on how we should respond to their needs by customizing our plans, practices and programs. Lest too much analysis delays what we can do, I have gathered for you a ready-to-use list of practices – from the articles written here- which you can perhaps use in your companies to engage with Gen Y better. I will not explain them – hoping that will make you read the articles and understand more details from the authors directly.

Top 10 Gen Y friendly practices

1. *Introduce more media rich content in your internal communications*
2. *Get Gen Y to "reverse mentor" your older folks*
3. *Install a "bell" (like in Pizza Hut) in your offices to let your employees ring the bell and share joy*
4. *Observe Mazaddar Mondays, Fun Friday events and "Home shanti home " type of events*
5. *Create "Shadow Boards" with Gen Y professionals and give them more responsibility.*
6. *Encourage Gen Y and others to bring in their own gadgets (tablets, smart phones) to work places and provide intranet connectivity.*
7. *Encourage social work and provide opportunities to volunteer for social causes*
8. *Facilitate greater connectivity among employees and promote social media within the company.*
9. *Customize careers and invest in the skills development of Gen Y.*
10. *Don't forget the good old cash in compensation. Gen Y want it more, in cash.*

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In conclusion, let me urge you to act and act soon. Some one I am sure is planning the next journal on Gen Z! If you spend too much time in defining Gen Y and surveying what they want — you will only grow old !!!.

Acknowledgement

In putting together this journal three people have helped me a lot. Kalpana Veeraraghavan Diversity Leader at IBM India, S Rajeshwari, Operations coordinator at IBM and Dr PVR Murthy — the well-known HR consultant who is the real inspiration behind this journal. I thank them all sincerely.

Dr. PVR Murthy
Honorary Managing Editor on behalf of the Editorial Team

Dr. Pallab Bandyopadhyay

Dr. Arvind N Agrawal

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MANAGING MILLENNIALS

CHIP ESPINOZA

Abstract

"I want to bring my creativity to work, find meaning in what I do, and by the way when is my next promotion coming along?" — Sounds familiar? This could be a Gen Y employee in your company speaking to his or her manager at work. How well do we manage these aspirations? Do we experience conflict & frustration?

This article lays a foundation for thinking about generations, share an effective mindset for Managing Millenials, and most importantly identify key competencies needed for managing today's workforce & help demystify manager-millennial interactions that sometimes lead to frustration and conflict. The article argues that in an effort to embrace millenials it is critical for managers to suspend the bias of their own experience.

About the Author

Chip Espinoza, is the Chief Executive Officer of GeNext Consulting. He co-authored *Managing the Millennials: Discover The Core Competencies Needed for Managing Today's Workforce.*

Have you ever had an encounter with someone from another generation that left you completely puzzled? One explanation for your bewilderment could be what sociologist Norman Ryder refers to as demographic metabolism.[1] It occurs as each successive generation, or age cohort, enters the workforce. The interaction between generations serves as a seedbed for tension, conflict, and ultimately, transformation. It is what is referred to as *cohort effect.* [2]

It is my intention in this article to lay a foundation for thinking about generations, share an effective mind-set for managing Millennials, identify the competencies needed for managing today's workforce, and help demystify manager-millennial interactions that lead to frustration or conflict.

There are currently four generations interacting in the workplace today: Builders (1925-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Gen X (1965-1977), and Millennials (a.k.a. Gen Y, 1978-1996). It is important to note that whenever there is a discussion about age-cohorts, generalizations are made. Generalizations are useful for human reasoning but they are not to be taken as absolutes. That being said, it is valuable to examine how generations perceive each other — because, if acted upon, perceptions (real or not) may become reality. I will be focusing primarily on the Millennial Generation because they are both the largest and latest age-cohort to

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enter the workforce, and in four years they will comprise 42 per cent of the world's workforce. I think it is important to discuss the framework for understanding how generations are formed before we examine how they interact.

Generational Theory

Although ancient literature is ripe with references to the kinship concept of the term "generation" (grandparents, parents, grandchildren), it was German sociologist Karl Mannheim who is credited with establishing *generational theory*, which seeks to explain how attitudes and values are shaped in both individuals and groups. Mannheim thought that the generation a person belongs to determines, to a certain extent, her or his thoughts, feelings, and even behaviors. A generation is defined as a group that shares birth years and significant life events at critical developmental stages. Adolescence is the key period in which social generations are formed. The major events experienced during the time of formation are what shapes the outlook on the world exhibited by that generation. [3] Another term for Mannheim's *generation* is *age cohort*. In the sociological literature, the terms generation and cohort are often used interchangeably.

As each cohort ages together in a sociological context, its sense of generation grows stronger and more crystallized. Christopher Bollas explains, "They can define it clearly, differentiate it from older and younger generations, and in some respects analyze why their generation is the way it is."[4] Consequently, Builders, Baby Boomers, and Gen X can easily and readily identify what is different between their age-cohort and others. It is not until one becomes conscious of generational differences that one can develop genuine relationships between generations. Therefore my work is focused on moving the conversation *about* Millennials by identifying the competencies necessary to have productive conversations *with* Millennials.

Millennials are not unique with respect to creating a stir upon entry into the workplace. Their predecessors, Gen X, did not receive a parade or welcome hug when they entered either. Gen Xers were labeled as "slackers." Although they had very different ideas about work than the Baby Boomers, they were outnumbered and therefore had to learn how to negotiate the Baby Boomer world. They got the big *smack down* from the Baby Boomers when they entered the workforce and they had to learn how to manage up like no other generation. They are what I refer to as relationship brokers in the workplace. They have learned to play well with the Baby Boomers even though they probably identify more with the Millennials regarding what they think work-life should be. The Baby Boomers have set the organizational agenda for years — and part of the tension is that Millennials are a big enough cohort to challenge their *rules*.

Every generation develops a set of values that drives attitudes and ideas about work. The Builders had a philosophy of "When you get to work, leave your personal problems at the door." One generation later, the Baby Boomers implemented counseling hotlines to help employees with their problems. The workplace (policies, polity, philosophy) will always be dynamic because generational values change. I think that is what is so challenging and exciting about Human Resource Management. I find *Maslow's Hierarchy of Need* (Figure 1) useful for explaining differences in generational values and expectations.[5]

Maslow claimed that individuals' higher order needs only come into focus when lower order needs are satisfied. Physiological needs consist of food, water, clothing, shelter, and sleep. Safety needs include employment, physical safety, the family, and property. Belonging needs are comprised of friendship, love, and family.

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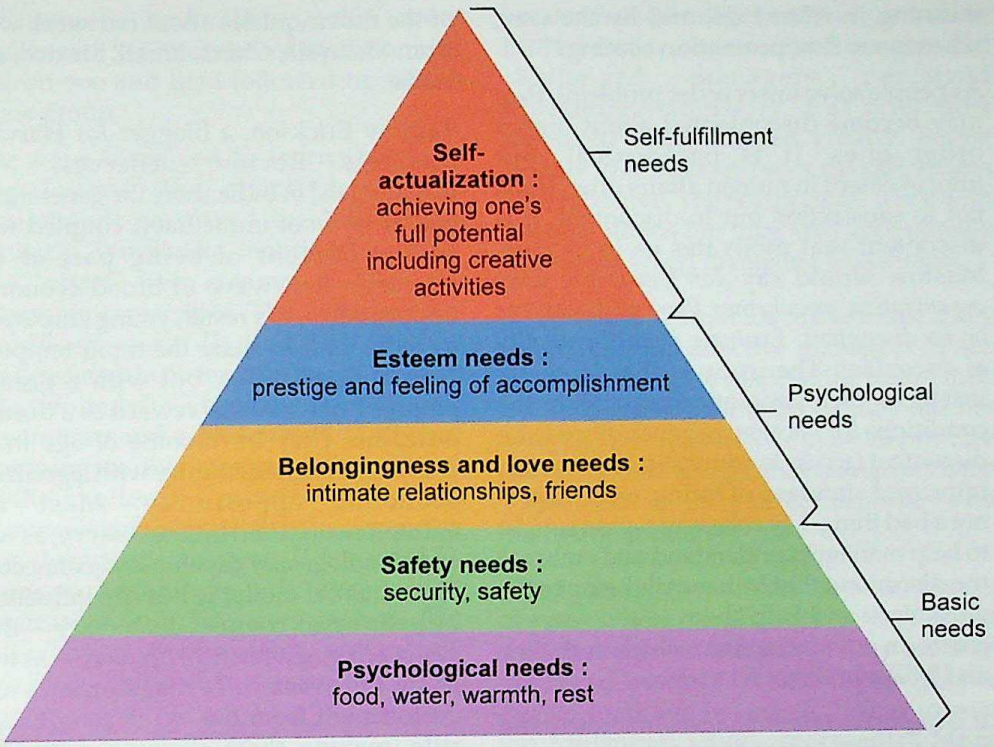
Self-actualization : achieving one's full potential including creative activities
Esteem needs : prestige and feeling of accomplishment
Belongingness and love needs : intimate relationships, friends
Safety needs : security, safety
Psychological needs : food, water, warmth, rest
Self-fulfillment needs
Psychological needs
Basic needs

Fig. 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Need

Esteem needs include self-esteem, confidence, achievement, and respect of others. Self-actualization needs encompass self-fulfillment, creativity, spontaneity, and problem solving.

The four generations in the workplace today entered their work lives at different places on Maslow's Hierarchy due to societal change and economic factors. In the U.S., the Builders started their work-life at the *safety* level. They are likely to say, "Why isn't a paycheck enough to motivate someone?" The Baby Boomers entered at the *belongingness* level. They value associations and titles. They are likely to say, "Listen, be patient, do your time, and you too can be partner." Gen X started at the *esteem* level. Belonging is a given to them and they prefer a meritocracy. They are likely to say, "I value work-life balance, too, but show me what you can do and we will talk."

Having had the privilege to meet with many leaders in India recently at the Chief Learning Officer Summit in Mumbai I learned that Builders, Baby Boomers, and Gen X are more tightly banded on the Maslow Hierarchy than their U.S. cohort siblings due to minimal change in socio-economic factors prior to Liberalization in 1991. My colleagues in India suggested that Builders and Baby Boomers would be at the *basic needs* level and Gen X would have entered work at the *belongingness* level. Are you ready for this? They believe Indian Millennials are entering between the *esteem* and *self-actualization* levels. Due to Liberalization and globalization, young Indians know that India is a major player in the world today. Unlike their predecessors, they are more like Millennials around the world. They are likely to say, "I want to bring my creativity to work, problem-solve, find

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meaning in what I do, and by the way, when is my first promotion coming?"

As people solve lower order problems, they may become discontented about higher order ones. It is paradoxical, but improvement in human affairs often leads not to satisfaction but to discontent. It is discontent that motivates us to change. Maslow would say *don't evaluate your organization on whether there is discontent or no discontent. Evaluate it on the quality of discontent.* The irony is that in many instances each generation can create the conditions for successive generations to be discontent (access to education, technology, improved standard of living, etc.). That is not a bad thing. My colleagues and I sought to help managers understand and embrace the discontent that Millennials bring to the workplace and help them to see ways to create an environment in which both they and Millennials could thrive.

It is important for managers to understand that Millennial attitudes and behaviors are a product of culture and how they are perceived is a result of their acting out of their intrinsic values. It should not be surprising, because it is not rational to think that Millennials will behave inconsistent with the culture in which they grew up.

Millennials Are Millennials All Over The World

Before I share our research findings, it is important to note a couple of things. The literature review for *Managing the Millennials: Discover the Core Competencies For Managing Today's Workforce*, particularly the peer-reviewed work, was very geocentric. One limitation of the research in our book is that all of the managers interviewed were from North America. Since publishing the book and having had the opportunity to train managers from all over the World, the managerial perceptions in this article are consistent with the experience of managers from around the globe. Interestingly, some of the first inquiries about our work were from Malaysia, China, Brazil, Mexico, and India.

Tammy Erickson, a blogger for Harvard Business Review observes, "Y's [Millennials] in India share the generation's global sense of immediacy, coupled with the excitement of being part of the country's first wave of broad economic opportunity. As a result, young employees in India tend to share the rapid tempo of U.S. Y's ambitions, but with a greater emphasis on financial reward as a desired outcome. They have come of age in an exciting, dynamic country with significant economic opportunity. Most are entrepreneurial and business savvy, as well as technologically capable and connected. Their mental model is heavily influenced by India's rich, complex democracy — they easily accept diversity of opinion — as well as by the Western heritage of laws and customs left from the old days of British rule, making them strongly suited for global interaction."[6] The same could be said of many other countries. One multinational company with which I work considers managing the expectations of their Millennials in Mexico more difficult than in their U.S. operations.

The interest in Millennials is not a North America thing — it is a global phenomena. The consistency of how they are viewed throughout the world gives credence to Mannheim's generational theory. Due to technology, Millennials are experiencing the world together in a way that no other generation ever has. They are *glocal*— meaning what happens globally is local for them.

Research Design

My colleagues and I were interested in finding out if there were managers that were effective at managing Millennials, and if so, why? We conducted a research project in which we asked company HR executives to provide us with six managers, three who were effective at managing

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Millennials and three who were challenged. We interviewed each manager one-on-one and then followed up with a focus group.

We were surprised to learn that both populations (the effective and the challenged) perceived the Millennials similarly. Words like "entitled," "brash," and "smart" were common in all of the interview transcripts. The focus groups produced no discord or strong disagreement between the groups. Both the effective and challenged managers shared frustrations and experiences that aligned. One thing we did not expect was that many of the challenged managers left their interviews commenting that the experience was therapeutic for them. It felt good for them to be able to talk about their frustration with younger workers. The interviews with the effective managers produced an *effective perspective.*

The Effective Perspective

Among other things, our study revealed differences in perspective that can make or break what we call *generational rapport.* As I stated earlier, our effective managers and challenged managers perceived Millennials similarly, but how they managed them differed greatly. Below (Figure 2) is an example of the differences in perspective. The perspectives work with all generations but they are exponentially important when managing Millennials.

In an effort to embrace Millennials, a key adaptation the effective managers in our study made was to suspend the bias of their own experience. Simply put they did not use their own experience as a blueprint for everyone else. Rather, they started with the experience of their direct reports — no matter how limited.

The inability to suspend the bias of one's own experience will inhibit self-reflection or learning. For instance, "Why am I so bothered by the fact that my employee wants work-life balance?" "What threats do Millennial values represent?" More importantly, "How will I need to change?" Simply put, failing to suspend the bias of

Perspective	The Effective Managers	The Challenged Managers
Adaptability	Talked about their own need to change in order to manage in "today's world."	Talked about how others needed to change in order to make it in the "real world".
Self-efficacy	Believed there was something they could do about their situation.	Believed that there was little they could do about their situation.
Confidence	Allowed their subordinates to challenge them (ideas, processes, ways of doing things).	Sanctioned or punished their subordinates for challenging them.
Power	Used the power of relationship versus the power of their position.	Felt the only power they had was their positional authority.
Energy	Working with Millennials made them feel younger.	Working with Millennials made them feel older.
Success	Saw themselves as key to the Millennials' success.	Saw the Millennials as an impediment to their own success.

Fig. 2. The Effective Versus Challenged Perspectives

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one's own experience excuses managerial leaders from the adaptive work that is required of them to manage in today's world. Part of the adaptive process is getting outside of the orbit of your own experience and entering the world in which Millennials live.

An underlying premise of our work is that the people with the most responsibility have to adapt first. It may sound clichéd, but by reaching out first, managers will create an environment in which the less mature can adapt. Adapting does not mean acquiescing to the whims of an individual or a generation. Adaptive managers have the ability to create environments that allow for enough discomfort so that people will feel the need to change, but safe enough so that they can change.

The Core Competencies Needed for Managing Today's Workforce

Managerial leaders who understand the values behind the behaviors that are perceived negatively by others have an edge in maximizing the potential of their workforce. The nine perceived orientations of Millennials as experienced by our managers are: (1) autonomous, (2) entitled, (3) imaginative, (4) self-absorbed, (5) defensive, (6) abrasive, (7) myopic, (8) unfocused, and (9) indifferent. For every perceived orientation, we have listed a set of corollary intrinsic values. As you can see, intrinsic Millennial values are normal, if not admirable. Figure 3 lists how managers perceive Millennials, the Millennial value behind the perception, and the managerial competency required to effectively manage Millennials. The chart can help you to suspend a pre-judgment that could lead to a stereotype threat resulting in conflict, and it also informs managerial behavior that results in building trust and rapport with Millennials. [7]

Once we identified the perceptions managers had of working with Millennials, we listened to how the effective managers responded to each of the Orientations. Our aim was to understand just what separated managers who were successful in working with Millennials from those who struggled. We discovered that successful managers practiced a set of core competencies that are essential to effectively managing Millennial employees. The competencies fall within three behavioral categories: (1) adapting, (2) communicating, and (3) envisioning.

Adapting is the willingness to accept that a Millennial employee does not have the same experiences, values, or frame of

Perceived Orientation	Millennial Intrinsic Value	Required Managerial Competency
ADAPTING		
Autonomous Entitled Imaginative	Work-Life Balance Reward Self-Expression	Flexing Incenting Cultivating
COMMUNICATING		
Self-Absorbed Defensive Abrasive	Attention Achievement Informality	Engaging Disarming Self-Differentiating
ENVISIONING		
Myopic Unfocused Indifferent	Simplicity Multitasking Meaning	Broadening Directing Motivating

Fig. 3. Perceived Orientations, Values, and Managerial Competencies

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reference that you had when you were the same age. Adapting successfully may require adjustments to your management style. In some cases it may require changes to your organization's policies and procedures. The adapting competencies are "Flexing with the Autonomous," "Incenting the Entitled," and "Cultivating the Imaginative."

Communicating refers to the ability to make a connection at a relational level. It is the primary area where tension can escalate into emotional conflict. In the saddest cases, professional relationships deteriorated so much that we observed personal attacks. For the manager who is committed to succeeding despite relational tension, communicating is essential. It is about staying engaged even when both parties are frustrated. The communicating competencies are "Engaging the Self-Absorbed," "Disarming the Defensive," and "Self-Differentiating from the Abrasive."

Envisioning is about lifting the horizons among the unmotivated and myopic. It incorporates management practices that create both meaning and accountability for the Millennial employee. In practice, envisioning entails connecting employees' personal goals and aspirations with the organization's objectives. Without the Adapting and Communicating skills it is highly unlikely that envisioning can take place. The envisioning competencies are "Broadening the Myopic," "Directing the Unfocused," and "Motivating the Indifferent."

Managers Are The Key

Recruiting and on-boarding are important functions for attracting Millennials — but when it comes to retention, we identified managerial leaders as key because they have the greatest amount of responsibility and influence with respect to daily duties and interactions with Millennials. That, coupled with the fact that employees leave managers and not organizations, leads me to believe that equipping managerial leaders is the best way to address the challenge of integrating Millennials into the workforce. The quality of rapport that is established between Millennials and managers will directly impact both short-term and long-term personal *and* organizational effectiveness. It is important to move beyond anecdotal finger pointing and seek real solutions. Organizations that do not take the Millennials' values seriously will experience what Matilda Riley refers to as *structural lag* — outmoded institutions failing to provide opportunity.[8]

Through the work my colleagues and I have done in this area, it is our goal to provide a measurable framework for thinking about and working with Millennials.

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A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE ON GENERATION Y: THEIR NEEDS, ATTITUDES AND ASSETS AT WORK

REGINA ECKERT

Abstract

Are Gen Y generational issues for real or just hype? Is it that these are simple age differences - which will not persist when Gen Y's grow older? In other words, will a Gen Y in 10-15 years share similar values, character as Gen X shows today?

While the jury is still out on this theory, the Centre for Creative Leadership has launched research studies for the last 10 years in North America & Europe to look at the myths and realities of generational differences. This article discusses complex workplace attitudes towards issues such as loyalty, need for job security, learning orientation & generational conflicts at work across a number of Western cultures. A few of the prevailing myths are debunked based on this research. The article also throws up surprising evidence around differences in

Western and Eastern European nations — caused due to the radical changes in the socio-political-economical environment.

About the Author

Regina H. (Gina) Eckert, Senior Research Associate EMEA, Centre for Creative Leadership Gina is the representative of CCL's Research department in the EMEA region. Gina holds a degree in psychology from the University of Munich, Germany, and a PhD in Management from Aston Business School, UK.

In the movie "Up in the Air", George Clooney plays Ryan Bingham, a corporate downsizer who flies around the US making people redundant. Bingham is very good at what he does, putting a lot of preparation and research into his work - he reads up on the employee he is about to fire, and figures out what makes them tick before he gives them a motivational speech about how redundancy could potentially be a good thing for them.

When a young, hotshot graduate, Natalie Keener, joins Bingham's team, she has a far less emotional take on the approach. She sees employees as digits in a machine, and is willing to go as far as to remove the personal touch by using video-conferencing to let employees know about their impending redundancy. While the film is about the changing nature of human resource personnel, it also shows the generational difference

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and stereotypes facing the modern workplace.

Companies face a struggle finding the balance between offering an environment suitable to younger employees and engaging the older generation to retain their skills, experience and knowledge. Generation specific human resource, management and leadership strategies are now at the fore of developing and retaining a qualified and flexible modern workforce.

Generational theory plays out differently in different parts of the world. In Europe, as opposed to the United States, scholars prefer to group Gen Y according to events, blurring strictly definitive yearly lines. Most broadly, Gen Y in Europe can be regarded as birth cohorts after 1976. Yet also within Europe, there are important differences: For example, in Russia, Gen Y entered the workforce at a time when society was just emerging from apparent freefall. After the collapse of communism, oligarchs had carved up the industrial spoils of the former Soviet Union and amassed incredible wealth. The country had just come out of a hyperinflation fuelled debt-spiral. Shaped by these experiences, Russian Gen Y recognises a need for creating their own security, financially and socially, and is willing to work very hard early in their career in order to achieve this. Many members of this generation are interested in starting their career in Western multinationals, which have sophisticated development paths and secure fast career growth. After reaching a certain career and salary level, this generation then hopes to change into senior positions in Russian companies, where development opportunities are limited, but work-life balance is easier to achieve.

In Western Europe, job security is a major concern for Gen Y. Even though this generation was coined by positive consequences of the European economic and monetary union, they are the most vulnerable generation in the current economic downturn. Youth unemployment is generally higher than unemployment in older generations; and about 5 million young EU citizens, approximately a fifth of the under-25 population, is currently unemployed. Close to two-fifths of Gen Yers in Spain are unemployed, and almost a quarter in France. To put it in context, that figure is about 17% in the United States.

These examples show the degree of variance of the formative experiences of this generation across Europe. Categorisation issues aside however, more substantive issues truly define Gen Y in Europe, many of them grounded in the increasing technological, societal and economic development of Europe overall. When researchers analysed Generation x 15 years ago, this generation was already recognised as more highly educated, technologically interested, and mobile, than previous generations. The same is again true now of Gen Y - they are even more highly educated, technologically savvy, mobile and flexible than other generations.

The Myths and Realities of Generational Differences

Researchers lead an ongoing debate whether many of the differences that we observe between Gen Y and Gen X are real generational differences or simple age differences. Will these differences persist even if Gen Y grows older, or will an aged Gen Y in 10 or 15 years' time show similar values and characteristics as Gen X shows today? The verdict on this argument is still outstanding, yet our own research in the Center for Creative Leadership shows that many of the characteristics that are currently attributed to Gen Y might simply be age characteristics. For example, Gen Y is portrayed as having a different view on authority than previous generations. This

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new generation does not have as much respect for positional authority. Instead, they focus on what their leaders and managers produce, and want their leaders to remove obstacles and give them what they need to work well and comfortably. Unsurprisingly, with their penchant for questions (combined with their relative youth and lack of experience), they also need a lot of feedback and guided supervision. Similar statements were made about Gen X a few years ago - therefore lending support to the hypothesis that many conflicts and differences that are said to be generational are actually due to the principles of human growth, development and ageing in general.

Over the past 10 years, the Center for Creative Leadership has launched research studies both in North America and in Europe to look at the myths and realities of generational differences. This research included all generations, from Baby Boomers to "older" Gen Y (born before 1980). We looked at issues of personal and professional development across generations, as well as how different generations at work were getting along with each other.

In both North America and Europe, we found that generational differences were largely myths, and there was general agreement across all respondents, regardless of their age, about what was important to them in their working life and careers. Close to three-quarters of all the respondents agreed with the notion that their colleagues and the social environment at work are the most rewarding aspect of their job. Thus, one of the myths that the study debunked was that Gen Yers were only interested in the monetary gain from their job.

The cliché that older employees are more loyal is another myth that was debunked. We did not find that younger employees were more self-interested, nor were they less interested in the organisation than older employees. However, they did feel their jobs were less secure - a trait perhaps brought on by the volatility they have seen in their short careers - than older employees. This could explain why they are more vigilant about their job alternatives: the concept of job security no longer applies to the same extent to both generations.

To make the story more complex, Eastern and Western Europe differ in their perception of job security. 71% of Western European respondents thought they had job security while only just above half of Eastern Europeans did. The Eastern European countries have generally seen large economic swings that included hyperinflation, massive liberalisation and on top of that had to witness the relative chaos of the effects of being plugged into the vagaries of global market capitalism.

Importantly, the concept of organisational loyalty needs to be put into context of other workplace attitudes. We found that, across all of Europe, managers' learning orientation could explain generational differences in loyalty. Generation X and Y managers were more likely to be loyal and show a demonstrated intention to stay at the company if care was taken to develop them as leaders; however, older generations' loyalty to organisations was not tied so much to development opportunities. Gen Y seeks employers that invest heavily in training and development and frequently present clear opportunities and illustrate pathways for long-term progression. Gen Yers also prefer the training to be multi-faceted, which offers a variety of daily work opportunities in accordance with a dynamic and forward-looking approach to the business. When these two factors, career development and on-the-job learning are combined, Gen Yers tend to stay

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In our research, we also found surprisingly little evidence of generational conflict at work. Only a fifth of all respondents experienced such tensions. Interestingly, most generational conflict was reported by young managers from Eastern Europe. This may be explained by the fact that these countries experienced a radical change in the economic system followed by a drastic turnover in management and power from the Soviet to the post-Soviet generation. This difference shows how fractured society in these countries still is, and multinational organisations venturing into Central and Eastern Europe should show diligence and fairness in dealing with these generational tensions.

Developing Young Leadership Talent

Development opportunities really matter to young employees and next generation managers, as described above. They also matter to companies, who keep reporting an increasing need for soft skills training - communication, negotiation, leadership. In order to retain leadership talent in Gen X and Y and create sustainable leadership pipelines, companies need to find cost-effective ways to offer interesting development and training prospects. So how to go about that? It is often argued that, due to their technological savviness and constant use of social media, Gen X and Y would learn best through technology-driven training, such as online learning on the internet, virtual corporate university courses, and distance-learning at higher education institutions. As these generations are constantly connected to others through Facebook and Twitter, they wouldn't need face to face contact for their development. However, after investing in costly e-learning platforms, practitioners are often badly surprised that these technology-based development offerings are not taken up to the envisaged extent. Why? Looking at trainees' motivation to learn and engage in professional development, we found that this motivation is also influenced by pedagogy and content. In our research, all generations, including Gen X and Y, preferred learning soft skills on the job, rather than in a classroom, and certainly not in solitary confinement IN front of their computer. Younger managers value individual coaching more than older managers, but all generations are less motivated to learn through technology-based methods like online learning, simulations and distance learning. Blended learning solutions were slightly more accepted by Gen X and Y, yet these participants stipulated that the online education should complement more contact-intense methods of learning, but not play a prominent role. Thus, Human resource managers should not substitute face to face learning and other interactional methods of teaching job skills for more technology-based methods - rather, these can be offered in addition and be integrated with existing training offerings.

Outlook

From a European point of view, Generation Y, while showing many characteristics typically associated with young age and little employment experience, is overall not very different from other generations of employees. They have similar hopes and fears, hope for development and career, and fear job loss and economic turmoil. This holds true for professionals and managers alike. However, organisations that look at the sustainability of their leadership pipeline can increase their attractiveness to Gen Y talent by offering a variety of learning opportunities, and offering them in attractive formats: On the job learning, individualised coaching, and feedback-intense trainings are the most motivating methods of development, even for younger generations.

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In times of increasing complexity, mobility, and speed of change, organisations cannot afford to rely on the mechanisms of selection for their leadership talent, but need to put additional efforts into developing these skills. Given the impending retirement of the large cohort of Early Baby Boomers in Europe (born 1946 to 1951) and the low birth rates for younger cohorts, an organisation is well advised to focus on developing internal talent rather than importing and buying such talent, only to lose it a few years later.

The provision of development opportunities is likely to increase organisational commitment of Gen Y managerial employees, especially in younger generations. Organisations that create an active learning culture will benefit from increased loyalty and commitment of their younger workers, and therefore have the advantage of higher retention and talent sustainability, which is as crucial a success factor in Europe as it is in other parts of the world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our profound thanks to all the contributors of articles, and book reviewers who have taken time off from their busy schedules out of their interest in the field of Gen Y.

We acknowledge with gratefulness, the excellent contribution of the Guest Editor Dr. S Chandrasekhar. Chandra, I would like to place on record our thanks for the passion with which you and your team worked for this issue.

Our special thanks to Mr. Prabhakar L., VP-Human Resources, ITC, Agri-Business Division, for his support as usual.

We acknowledge the support from Sunathy of Exclusive Search for ungrudgingly sharing the work.

Similarly thank you Padmaja Korde, HR Consultant for your painstaking efforts in preparing abstracts for all articles.

Thank you advertisers but for your support we would not have able to produce this journal as we have been mailing it free.

– Dr. PVR Murthy, Managing Editor
(On behalf of the Editorial Team)

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GENERATION Y: BRIDGING THE GULF TO MAKE THEM TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Dr CARINA PAINE SCHOFIELD, SUE HONORÉ and NARENDRA LALJANI

Abstract

While most research on Gen Y highlight their superior articulation, confidence and tech-savvy approach, have we come across any research elaborating the "missing skills" in today's young generation?

This research based article launched completely in the UK takes us through a unique perspective of Gen Y, their missing skills few amongst them being lack of self awareness or the inability to manage "difficult conversations". The findings also take us through the expectation gap between graduates and their managers. Experiences from Indian business leaders, also throws up differences between Gen Y in India and the UK providing a unique cross-cultural approach.

About the Authors

Dr Carina Paine Schofield is a Research Fellow at Ashridge. She has a first degree in Psychology and Computing, plus a postgraduate diploma and doctorate in Psychology.

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Technology is embedded in day to day life and rapid advances in technology have been reshaping learning, encouraging the view that younger generations learn in a fundamentally different way from those that have gone before them. However, technology impacts on all generations in the workplace; most employees experience new methods of learning in order to match business demands, their working lifestyles, their availability and their experience. Learning

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and communicating are fundamentally different from 20 years ago.

Governmental policies and availability of information on the Web have had a major influence on education for Gen Y. In the UK, in particular, there has been a drive to increase the number of people in higher education. The instant availability of simple factual knowledge on the internet has, to a certain extent, made memorisation of facts and formulae irrelevant. There is less emphasis on essay writing, in-depth research around a subject or expression of personal opinions and ideas.

The result is that the education system that Gen Y follow is quite different to that of most of their managers and therefore impacts upon expectations of Gen Y by those managers, and on the expectations of their workplace development by Gen Y themselves.

At Ashridge Business School, we have been conducting research over the last four years on Generation Y and their managers in the workplace. From talking to over 2,500 people and getting a multi-generational viewpoint, we have gained a very clear picture of what the real issues and challenges are and where improvements can be made.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Graduates' Missing Skills

Today's graduates are more qualified than ever before. However, a degree is not enough and the days of a degree being a passport to employment are long gone. Graduates need employability skills and our research shows managers see a lack of such skills in current graduate applicants. The Ashridge research from 2009 highlighted the following skills gaps:

- **Self-awareness** - Overall graduates seem to lack an understanding of the impact of their behaviour and actions on those around them and appear more self-centred than previous generations.
- **Self-management** - Generation Y wants to accept responsibility and be self-starters. However, there are some issues around time management, taking criticism on board and making time for reflective learning.
- **Basic numeracy and literacy skills**- Consistently English and mathematical skills of Generation Y were highlighted as lacking (e.g. spotting rogue figures, written business communication).
- **Independent thought** - Managers find Generation Y require more support and handholding and do not 'think outside the box' as much as they would like.
- **Problem-solving** - Generation Y need to further develop skills in analysis of information and identifying solutions.
- **Teamwork** - Graduates struggle to move from individual marks awarded in university to the team focus of the workplace. They need to learn to work collaboratively: a successful career depends on getting things done with others, not in competition with them.
- **Business / customer awareness** - Younger respondents had a lack of interest in, and understanding of, the foundations for business success, and building customer loyalty.
- **Communication** - As well as clear written communications, Generation Y graduates struggle with oral communication, especially concerning 'difficult conversations' and need support to develop these skills more than previous groups.
- **Risk awareness and evaluation** - According to managers, graduates seem less able to judge good / poor risks in business than their peers from previous generations.

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These skills underpin effectiveness at work. Today's graduates do have many of these employability skills, but they are not universal and not to the level that employers are seeking from the group as a whole. Hence, many employers have to invest in expensive remedial training for their new graduates.

Gaps in Expectations

There are also large gaps in **expectations** between graduates and their managers. Our 2011 research (undertaken with the Institute of Leadership and Management) highlights a number of areas of disconnect:

- Graduates have high expectations relating to **salary, job status** and **career progression**. A significant proportion of our employed graduate respondents state that salary (45%), job status (30%) and achievement in work (28%) are below their personal expectations and over half (57%) plan to leave their jobs within two years.
- **Work-life balance:** Despite their high career expectations, graduates do not buy into the long working hour culture in the same way their managers do.
- In terms of **relationships,** graduates want a manager who is a coach (56%). Although 75% of managers believe they are fulfilling the role of a coach, only 25% of graduates agree.
- Graduates value a high level of **freedom and independence** (43% want their managers to respect and value them, and 35% want to be trusted to get on with things). However, managers want graduates to gain experience before major work is delegated to them and 50% see regular feedback about performance and setting clear objectives (49%) as the most important managerial behaviours.

Overall, our findings suggest that graduates prioritise their careers whilst managers prioritise the company.

In order to improve retention and encourage more productive working relationships, there is an urgent need to bridge the gaps between what graduates expect and what organisations provide and between what organisations expect and what graduates bring.

Our research indicates that organisations need to review their recruitment approach and to match the recruits to the internal culture as well as articulate more clearly on career development and expectations of work.

Leaders in India

We extended our research to conversations with leaders in India and found that Gen Y in India is probably not that far different from their UK counterparts. However, the gulf may seem greater between Indian managers and their Gen Y employees because of the rapid change in the Indian economy / social structure and globalisation that has taken place over the last few decades. The world the managers experienced as new graduates is far different from that today.

Some prominent HR directors in India outline the main developments and local issues from their own perspective:

Neelam Gill Malhotra, Vice President HR, CSC India, an international IT services company, with over 20,000 employees in India:

"Profound socio-cultural shifts have been taking place in India. Now we have a generation that is ambitious, in a hurry, and inclined to think in 2 or 3 years horizons. They take the view that the more organisations you experience, the more exposure you get and the more you learn.

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"We gave the next generation a greater independence and freedom, as well as a largely Western mindset. Once you add the impact of a globalising media environment, as well as a buoyant market into the mix, you can see why we have a generation much more focused on consumption.

"It's become much harder to find talent, especially in a high growth industry like ours. Engagement is a major issue - how can we create a sense of belonging, and pride in the organisation? We need new strategies. This generation needs a level of challenge and stimulation, of excitement and growth. The moment they get bored, they're out of the door.

"It's also interesting to note that India now also has lots of managers who belong to Gen Y. They are all very tech-savvy, but there is a huge challenge in the area of people management skills - they often do not have the Emotional Intelligence that's needed."

The HR director of a leading Indian conglomerate:

"My sense is that the Gen Y people I come across are extremely articulate, well read, and generally aware of what's happening in the world around them. They have an entrepreneurial streak, and seek roles that provide entrepreneurial freedom.

"If you manage to retain 30% of your talent over a five-year horizon then you are doing an outstanding job.

"In my experience, retention is enhanced by the learning opportunities they see in the organisation. And by that, I don't mean the classroom. I mean opportunities to interact with the leadership group, or shadowing senior leaders."

Suvamoy Roy Choudhury, Regional HR Director, South Asia, Reckitt Benckiser:

"It's very tempting to say that Gen Y is very different, but I don't buy that. We still see fundamental values that are not very different - for example, a belief in loyalty and hard work. Their expectations are higher, and they are much more demanding, a self-assessment which is sometimes out of sync with rational analysis.

"A big trend is that they are very conscious of their peers. They do lots of social networking, so they share information, and they're aware of who's doing what, and this drives some of the choices they make. Being ahead of your peers is very important.

"In addition, family roles have been changing in India, and women are no longer exclusively responsible for what happens at home. This means we are getting more multi-tasking men, with an increasing concern for work-life balance.

"On the job experiences, and more frequent role changes - perhaps every 18 months - are considered highly desirable.

"Our Indian managers have real trouble keeping graduates. They want to move on quickly to gain experience, and nobody can keep them."

Paroma Roy Chowdhury, Country Head, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs, Google India

"Four things stand out. Firstly, this generation has a high level of self-confidence in its own ability, regardless of circumstances, is more confident and assertive, with a huge sense of entitlement.

"It faces a multiplicity of lifestyle and career choices, which have arisen from dramatic changes in the Indian economy where income levels have risen exponentially. Gen Y does not seem to believe in organic growth, what we are seeing is lots of job mobility. Stability is not a virtue anymore and an emphasis on work-life balance.

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"Work-life flexibility is crucial, and this generation is much more upfront about voicing these issues. In terms of learning, this generation has low boredom thresholds, and is more willing to embrace virtual learning and learning with peers.

This is not a reading generation, this is a broadband generation. They want instant gratification; they expect to be able to type a question and get an instant answer. In that sense I guess this is the Google generation."

In summary from the comments and our own research, the Indian Gen Y members are like their UK counterparts:

- Desire to progress and change jobs frequently - every 2-3 years
- Focused on self. Highly self-confident. Have strong sense of entitlement compared to previous generations
- Need development in emotional intelligence / people management skills
- Engagement levels at work are lower than previous generations
- Highly IT literate
- Vociferous about career wants / needs
- Want more of a work-life balance
- Strong relationship to peers. Network highly
- Want on-the-job and virtual learning, not longer classroom sessions

Indian Gen Y is different in:

- A rapid pace of change compared to their predecessors - Gen Y more globally focused / capitalist / competitive
- A stronger Indian focus on changing jobs to advance than in the UK.
- Changing role of women / men in the home more pronounced than in UK
- More loyal / hard working when within a company, than in UK
- Higher quality education in key skills than UK counterparts, such as language, maths and fundamental business skills.

Going forward - key questions

Should learning be redesigned to cater to the unique learning styles of Gen Y?

First of all, our research shows that it is important to select those graduates that fit the corporate culture, and are therefore more likely to stay and flourish. Rigorous pre-employment testing will highlight key gaps in learning and behaviour.

Interviewees also recommend avoiding an emphasis on learning and development approaches in the recruitment process that are not used in the organisation - such as in-depth coaching or game-playing, so that graduates do not end up with false expectations on their development.

Each new graduate is an individual and will have individual development needs. Our corporate interviewees cautioned applying a blanket approach to Gen Y development, but there are a few key areas that need to be considered. As Gen Y lags behind in people / relationship skills they often need more work in this area. It is not universally true that Gen Y has a short attention span; if they are engaged in learning then they can concentrate.

However, companies have found that it makes sense to look towards redesigning their learning in bite-sized chunks, providing a variety of different learning experiences and focusing on real-life examples relevant to the actual jobs of the learners. Gen Y appreciate discussions and debates in learning rather than didactic teaching by experts. Providing follow-on projects in the workplace also helps reinforce learning and put it in context.

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Ongoing coaching / mentoring is key for a generation that has had a high level of support through home and school-life.

These approaches to learning are not just for Gen Y. Employees of all ages benefit from them and they should be applied across the organisation, simply because they are good learning practice.

Are there successful examples of organisations having actually redesigned their learning interventions to suit the Gen Y?

A major manufacturer completely redesigned their graduate induction program, from a month-long mainly classroom-based program to shorter, more interactive sessions. They set up a Facebook site for the graduates to access even before they joined, and involved them in simulation and virtual reality exercises. Line managers were involved in the learning process, too. They developed special networking sessions to help the graduates meet a variety of colleagues to establish an internal network.

A major consultancy focused strongly on two-way mentoring involving new graduates and older, more experienced colleagues. They helped to facilitate initial meetings and gave everyone guidelines on managing such relationships, but expected both employees to determine if the relationship was going to be productive and to manage it themselves.

In one case, the older employee was able to help the younger one with influencing skills within the organisation and management-level presentation skills, whilst the younger employee was able to provide IT knowledge on new tools, on growing a large network of contacts and in finding electronic sources of rare information.

What should companies do, going forward, to design and execute a Gen Y friendly learning strategy?

Gather feedback from *everyone* in the organisation about a new learning strategy. More issues can be triggered within an organisation by only focusing on Gen Y or graduates. And follow this advice:

- Review your use of *classroom* learning and redesign to use only where appropriate.
- Find ways to *engage* them in their learning, even if it is in subjects they dislike or where they are weak and need much work.
- Ensure as much *interaction* as possible - with peers/colleagues. Simulate.
- Make it *practical and relevant.* Look for on-the-job opportunities.
- Use appropriate *media* / communication mechanisms.
- Make sure that any learning has good *facilitators* / teachers who treat the graduates as knowledgeable colleagues and hit the right level of learning. Review your 'educators' and retrain / change them if necessary.
- Don't shy away from **hard messages** or difficult learning / discussions.
- Find new ways to *evaluate* / test change in behaviour / acquisition of learning that really work and show real business benefits to the organisation and individual.
- Put in a *review cycle* / process that makes graduates feel they are progressing and their needs (as well as colleagues' evaluation of what they need for development) are being met.

Design a learning strategy that is a sensible mix of cost-benefit and fun!

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GETTING HR READY FOR GENERATION Y : AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

Dr. IJE JIDENMA

Abstract

Picture the African continent and only one homogenous vision comes to our mind. But is that really correct? Did we know that even when it comes to Gen Y, African countries have their own unique definitions?

In Nigeria Gen Y are those people born after the oil boom just before the onset of graduate unemployment. In Kenya Gen Y is seen as the group born around the time of the coup.

And in South Africa, Gen Y is the beneficiaries of the post-apartheid new world, the period of freedom.

This article based on the studies carried out in these countries describes Gen Y behavior in the organizational context. A very thorough analysis based on the McKinsey 7s Model goes on to recommend various practical approaches to respond to the new challenge.

About the Author

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Generation Y has various descriptions and interpretations in the literature. There are no precise dates marking the starting or end point of this generation. However, it includes people born between the mid 1970s and 1990s and in some cases, early 2000s. The term Generation Y first appeared in an August 1993 Maxim editorial to describe teenagers of the day, which they defined , at that time, as separate from Generation X. Generation Y has also been referred to as the Millennial Generation, Millennials, Generation Next, Net Generation etc. Generation Y people are the newest and youngest members of the workforce. Their presence is felt like never before due to their distinct characteristics and inherent power. The characteristics of Generation Y vary from region to region depending on the prevailing socioeconomic conditions. However, the core essence of

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Generation Y is marked by profound communications and technological impact through the use of computers, social media, cell phones and other digital technology products.

There is dearth of research on Generation Y in the African Continent. For the purpose of this paper, references will be largely made to two studies conducted in Kenya by PriceWaterhouseCoopers and in South African by Oxygenz South Africa. These reports generally mirror the works of scholars in the developing countries. Practical examples from Nigeria, a country of about 150 million people, will be used to illustrate the current situation and the challenge it poses to Human Resources Management. Overall, Africa is not homogeneous in the degree of differentiation of Gen Y from the other generations, but obviously has commonalities. The examples from these three countries across the continent tend to validate these.

In Nigeria, Generation Y are those people born after the oil boom just before the onset of graduate unemployment, the introduction of the structural adjustment programme and the devaluation of the national currency, the naira. The birth of this generation, saw general decline in core values and morals of the people as well as a general decline in the standard of education.

In Kenya, Generation Y is seen as the group born around the time of the coup, with the key issues in the last decade being multi-party elections, the post-election violence, the coalition government and referendum.

In South Africa, Generation Y are the beneficiaries of the post-apartheid new world; the period of freedom. Many in South Africa are the first black generation witnessing new challenges and opportunities at the workplace. For South African business leaders, this pool of generation "next" is specifically different in at least their demographics and the fact that there is a legislative intervention on government's part to ensure that they are not forever more excluded from main stream economy or confined to being blue collar workers only. The reduction in the births and total births per woman, also appear to hold promise for more qualitative attention.

Generally, Generation Y is defined in Africa as elsewhere, by information communications technology (ICT) impact. ICT has played a profound role, almost overtaking the place of culture or traditional way of life. Time and speed have worked together, to take a place hitherto unimagined in the continent. The new workplace in Africa is changing greatly so also the wider environment. The quantum change in terms of the way service is delivered is immense and in consonance with what is obtained globally. This means that despite the great infrastructural issues (eg. lack of good roads, pipe-borne water, irregular power supply etc), the African workplace is generally hooked to the internet which provides it with real-time information on developments as well as trends. The Generation Y members of the workforce use social media such as Facebook and Twitter for immediate communication and networking. In some cases, Generation Y members are hooked on cable networks (eg. CNN, DSTV) and actually have the privilege of watching events happen globally on real-time basis. Some employ the use of their blackberry to a hilt, optimising group synergies.

This generation is highly team-oriented. They network and share information and bring a sort of dynamism hitherto not seen before at the workplace. While this is positive, the challenge to HR is in

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continuous engagement. Engagement not just in terms of time, but in terms of new ideas and ways of doing things.

In Africa, while the workplace has advanced with the deployment of computers, workers generally do their assigned tasks in Nigerian organisations, particularly in the urban areas, using computers. However, it is a truism that many workplaces lack the IT capacity needed for monitoring and evaluating staff use of these facilities. Thus, apart from the big organisations (eg. multinationals), the Generation Y HR challenge is in the tracking staff work and use of time. A staff who works for company X may actually be using his official time to do unauthorised work for company Y or even be involved in multitude of non-related work, using the social media such as Facebook and Youtube.

The Oxygen South Africa Report presents Generation Y as a remarkable generation and stated at least six reasons why they need to be specially understood:

- They are not enough of them coming to the workforce
- They are transformational
- They do things differently
- They are techno-savvy
- They are challenging
- They are agile multi-taskers.

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GENERATION Y EXPOSED — AN AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE

AVRIL HENRY

Abstract

Ever heard of Gen "Why"? This article based on research study carried out in Australia says "Why" seems to be the favorite word of GenYers both at home and at work. Many older people see this as challenging their authority when the real intention behind the question is to learn and understand the context of things and the way they work.

The study came up with a startling insight – 89 % of Gen Yers surveyed said their parent's opinion is most important to them followed by that of friends. The article argues that it is an incorrectly held belief that Gen Y does not respect authority. It is just that their views towards work & life are different. Yes, they will work for you but on their own terms! They are motivated by inspiring leadership, support for creativity & flexibility in work practices.

About the Author

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INTRODUCTION

It's not surprising that Generation Y is capturing the world's attention, considering they will be the biggest societal group to emerge since their Baby Boomer parents arrived. Generation Y were born from 1980 and are often referred to as the Net Generation or the Millennium Generation. I refer to them as the Global Generation, the first in history to break down geographic and cultural barriers through the use of technology — email before you phone and text before you talk.

CHARACTERISTICS

They are a self-aware, self-confident generation who care about the environment, have a strong social conscience and values which are more closely aligned with those of the Veteran Generation, their grandparents (born prior to 1946) rather than the Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1964) or Generation X (born 1965 – 1979). They have been raised by their parents, the Baby Boomers, to challenge the status quo, to be outspoken and self-confident. As a result of this strong self-confidence and self-awareness, Generation

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Y is a very optimistic generation. They are the only generation that has embraced constant change as a way of life.

Gen Y are loyal to their parents, friends and team mates at work. In a national survey completed by my company some five years ago, 89 percent of the participants said that their parents' opinion is important to them, followed by the opinions of their friends and their manager or supervisor at work. It is an incorrectly held belief that Generation Y does not respect authority or the elderly — quite the contrary. They are interested in learning from older generations, with their most often asked question being "Why?" Many older people, particularly at work, see this as challenging their authority and the status quo, when the real intention behind the question is to learn and understand the context of things and the way they work, now and in the past.

They are the first generation that works to live, rather than lives to work. Generation Y stood on the sidelines watching the Boomers and Generation X sacrifice lifestyle for work, and they won't be making the same mistakes. Yes, they'll work for you but only on their terms. They're the most technologically sophisticated generation, educated and highly employable, and they know it. In order to be successful in recruiting Generation Y, an organisation needs to differentiate itself in their eyes; it's the "coolness" of the brand that is important to them. It's not just where you sit in the building, what you wear or the car you drive – it's who you work for and what the organisation stands for. Generation Y asks "What does who I work for say about me?" The mantle of social responsibility and good corporate citizenship has kudos with them.

Work isn't all about the "hard slog" for Generation Y and if they feel they "don't belong", then they will leave their job, often without another job to go to, much to the horror of their security conscious parents. They are a generation who think differently to any other. Living with constant change their whole lives has made them flexible, creative and able to cope with change comfortably. They are risk takers with no expectations of stability, and adapt to change more easily than older generations.

LEADERSHIP

In the workplace, strong leadership is the number one motivator for the two youngest generations, namely Generation X (born 1965 – 1979) and Generation Y (born 1980 – 1995), who comprise approximately 50% - 59% of Australian workplaces. Their principal loyalty is not to the organisation, rather to their careers and a good manager. The absence of strong leadership and a good manager is the number one reason many leave organisations. When challenged on what good leadership means, Generation X say "Leaders who do what they say they will do"; with Generation Y who are impatient by nature, extending this to include " ... when they say they will do it!" This strong desire by Australian employees for good leadership is further supported by the Best Australian Employers surveys conducted by Hewitt Associates over the decade, which has identified the number one factor (setting such organisations apart from all others), as strong leadership and a commitment to the people inside the organisation.

KEY MOTIVATORS

Currently approximately 80% of board positions, senior and executive positions in Australia are occupied by Veterans and Baby Boomers, who have a different understanding of the key motivators of the two younger generations.

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The key motivators for Generation Y are:

- *Inspiring Leadership*

  Unlike Generation X who are more skeptical of authority, Generation Y is more optimistic and want inspiring leadership, rather than just effective leadership. In focus groups and my 2005 national survey on Generation Y, I asked them: "What does inspiring leadership mean to you?" They responded in general with: "I want to work for someone who loves what they do, and loves it so much that they want to teach you what they know. Do you know how boring it is to work for someone who doesn't enjoy their job, and just complains about work? That's not fun, and I'm out of there!" Gen Ys want to work for managers who respect them as human beings, not just as employees. They are the first generation who will not only expect, but will demand, mutual respect. They believe that you don't have a right to expect respect from them simply because, in their words, "you are older, grey, or have a fancy title on your business card, or are more senior than us in the organisation – you get respect from us when you show respect first, and lead by example!" What Generation Y expects from their managers is someone who knows what they are doing, listens to them, rolls up their sleeves and works with the team, mentors them, and inspires and motivates them to be the best they can be. The most important retention strategy for Generation Y lies in how well their bosses treat them!

- ***A supportive environment which encourages new ideas and creativity, and gives constructive, regular feedback***

  Generation Y want to be heard at work, they want to express their ideas and importantly, they don't expect that their manager will always agree with them or accept their ideas. What is important to them is that they are heard, and not dismissed as being too young or inexperienced to be able to have an opinion or able to add value. Gen Ys are less "fierce" about their independence than Generation X, and more comfortable and self assured. They still want to do things their way, but they work best in teams. Generation Ys have been over-supervised as they grew up by their parents and teachers, constantly busy and stimulated through before and after-school activities, technology and mobile phones. They have been so micromanaged as they grew up that they are now keen to manage their own time. However, this means that managers need to help new Generation Y recruits to manage their time and tasks more efficiently, by coaching them on time and priority management, rather than by instructing them using rules, regulations and policies, which they will find restrictive and reminiscent of their youth.

  For Gen Ys, the principle cause of stress is not the work they are asked to do, but an unapproachable manager who yells at them and tries to put them down or bully them, makes unrealistic demands and treats them like "kids". Their ideal boss is someone who is positive, approachable and makes them feel comfortable. When it comes to feedback, Gen Ys want regular, constructive feedback. They want to know when they are doing a good job so that they can continue doing what they do well, and they want to know when they are not doing something well or properly, so they can improve. They want the feedback to be given when it is relevant, not months later during the annual performance review, and they want their manager to be honest about it.

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- ***Mentoring***

In the words of Generation Y, they want to be " ...mentored by cool, older people who like and respect young people!" Generation Y ask lots of questions, not to irritate their older managers or colleagues, but because they want to learn. It is one of the reasons I call them "Generation Why?" because it is their favourite word both at home and at work. Ironically it was us, their Baby Boomer parents, who taught them to challenge the status quo, and also taught them "There is no such thing as a stupid question, except the one you don't ask!" We then sent them into the workplace, and said "...but not at work!" However, they don't accept or understand that, as for them they just have "one life", and they do not distinguish between a home and work life, so their approach is the same regardless of the environment in which they find themselves. They want to be mentored by older people from whom they learn, not only about work, but from their life's wisdom and history. They appreciate those mentors who are patient, will explain things to them and encourage them to ask questions. Organisations that encourage and support mentoring programs, with appropriate training for both mentors and mentees, and allow the time for mentoring relationships to be built during office time, will benefit from increased understanding and better relationships between the different generations, and between management and employees.

- ***Access to training and the most up-to-date technology***

Because Generation Y grew up with interactive media that combined learning with fun, they simply expect learning to be part of their daily lives. They want to know that what they learn today will also be useful in the future. They are the most education-minded generation and believe that the key to job security is to be multi-skilled and well educated. They will change their careers many times, and every step of the way they will be seeking the skills for their "next job", either through training and development opportunities offered at work, or they will return multiple times to tertiary institutions to acquire new skills and tertiary qualifications. In the workplace they want to learn as much as they can about everything, the organisations, its business, its clients, and it does not have to be directly relevant to their current job. In their words, where asked what it is that they want to learn about: "Everything and anything that makes me good at this job and the next one." They also want to understand how what they are doing fits into the "big picture", and adds value to the overall process, product, service or clients.

Generation Y want state-of-the-art technology, and they want it now! Over the last decade technology has moved out of the office and home into their pockets! This is the generation that has had access to mobile phones and computers since they were toddlers. Now they carry mobile phones, iPods and iPads in their pockets and handbags. For them these devices are a way of life and they would be lost without them. As a result of technology, the pace of change continues to accelerate. To a Gen Y, every second is a stretch, a year is long term, and three years is a life time! Generation Y won't be lured by long term promises of career progression, they want to know what value can they add today, what can they learn today, what do you have to offer them now and how will they be developed today, for the future.

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- *Flexibility*

A classic Generation Y approach to work/life balance would be "Work isn't everything; I need flexibility so I can balance all my interests and relationships." Generation Y actually don't understand why the other generations talk about a work/life balance, as they see their life in simple terms: "I have a life", and to them it is one, holistic life of which work is simply a part. The other three generations have often treated their social lives as an extension of their work lives. Conversely, Generation Y view work as simply an extension of their busy, extensive social lives. This does not mean that they are not committed to the work they do, or that they do not think of work as important, they just don't believe it should be the most important thing in your life, and should not dominate your time. For them flexibility is about working for a manager who in their words: "...trusts that I will get the job done, to the agreed standards, and within an agreed time frame. It shouldn't matter where, when and how the job is done, as long as it is done properly and on a timely basis. This may mean that I have to work 14 hours one day, 7 hours the next day and only 3 hours the day after. We should be measured on outcomes, NOT hours in the office or being seen at our desks. If I have finished my work by 3:30pm, then I don't understand why I should sit at my desk until 5:00 pm, pretending to be busy."

It is important for organisations, in my opinion, to challenge traditional ways of thinking about work, where we work and how it gets done. If face-to-face interaction is not necessary, then let's challenge the way we think about work, as I believe this will be a key retention strategy for Generation Y.

WHAT DOES THIS REQUIRE FROM LEADERS?

- A more inclusive and collaborative way of leading; "command and control" leadership is likely to negatively impact on staff attraction and retention
- Listening to people in the organisation at all levels and from all areas. People want to "be heard", especially Gen X and Gen Y. They want to be given the opportunity to contribute to the organisation in a meaningful way
- Communicating more honestly and regularly with people throughout the organisation. They want to know how the organisation is doing, not only in the good times, but also when things are tough, and what they can proactively do to help
- Creating highly effective teams where people collaborate and feel a "sense of belonging", and are given the opportunity to demonstrate their true potential.

CONCLUSION

We may not fully understand this generation just yet, but we do know they have a strong value system, based principally on loyalty, honesty, trust, friendship and happiness. I believe they are already having a positive impact in the workplace and society by demanding that we have more inclusive, collaborative workplaces, that we are more open and honest in our communication, that we value diversity in all shapes and forms and that we respect each other as "whole" human beings. Their catch cry is "I have a life" – a notion many of us have forgotten in the pursuit of financial success and stability. Each generation could learn so much from each other if we just listened more to each other and remembered that the mind is like a parachute: it works best when it is open!

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COLLABORATING WITH GEN Y : LEVERAGING GENERATIONAL INSIGHT TO BUILD THE BEST WORKPLACE FOR GEN Y IN CHINA

This article contains significant excerpts from an important whitepaper published by IBM in China. The actual study was done by N-Dynamic a leading research outfit. We are publishing relevant parts of the white paper courtesy Gill Zhou, Vice president, Brand, Communication and CC&CA, IBM, Greater China Croup.

China's Gen Y is a Large and Unique Population

Generation Y, who for the purposes of this study are defined as people born from 1980 to 1989, is one of the most unique generations in human history. Born into a technology boom, Gen Y's are the first to grow up with computers, the Internet, and information at their fingertips. They are extremely comfortable using technology for social networking, global connections, and entertainment. They are also accustomed to the immediate gratification the world of technology has afforded them.

The effects of this incredible time in history on them are tangible in their attitudes in the workplace. Gen Y's are generally resourceful, creative, flexible, quick, efficient, technologically savvy, and more problem solving and communication oriented than generations before. However, they are also generally more demanding, less respectful of hierarchical structures (in which they can't immediately access people and information), impatient, more life-style oriented (at times, at the expense to their focus on work), and more concerned with their own achievements and advancement than that of a team.

In China, these attributes are even more pronounced. Not only did the Gen Y'ers in China grow up in the information age, but in the age of China's globalisation, its rapid opening up. They are one of China's most resource-rich generations; many of their families have economically improved their lifestyles significantly over a short amount of time. Born into the one-child policy era, these family's resources (coupled with high expectations) have been lavished on them. Now, they are currently China's young workers, early enough in their career to drive their work expectations from internal goals, rather than the outside pressures of family. They, like their global peers, are delaying marriage, children and home ownership longer. But these choices are very new to them and China, so places greater pressure on them to make the most out of their first working decade.

The result is a 230 million strong Gen Y workforce in China that is meaningfully different than its global peers. Because the pace of change in China's Gen Y's lifespan has been so rapid, they tend to be even more impatient and eager for resources and advancement than their global peers. They can also afford to be; the demand for qualified Gen Y's in China currently outstrips supply unlike in other parts of the world. However, due to the same rapidity, Gen Y in China has grown up in a more traditional education system and culture

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not yet adapted to the new pace of capitalism. Economic and parental pressure for success has risen with the explosion of new opportunities, but Gen Y's are still learning how to harness the new entrepreneurial and technological energy in China to their advantage. As they are finding their way, their parents are ageing and looking to them for caretaking. With few real mentors ahead of them (unlike developed countries where industries have matured in slower steps), they enter the workforce with gaps between their skills and job responsibilities, between their expectations for success and their abilities to reach it, and between their performance and company standards. The potential for failure feels high for many of them, and the diligence to meet and work through failure is very low.

Businesses can no longer afford to wait to address Gen Y's needs

The cost of not addressing these issues now will be even higher in the next generations. Gen Y is not an anomaly. It is an indication of the future. If Gen Y's are entrepreneurial and demanding, their younger peers are even more so. If Gen Y's expectations for success are high, the next generation's will be even higher. Systems put into place now to address Gen Y employees will serve as strong platforms for employees to come.

Gen Y is also the future generation of managers, visionaries, and leaders. Their strengths - if used correctly - will propel China's companies into decades of success. They will build companies that speak to themselves and consumers to come. They will harness technology, facilitate greater globalisation, create new industries, and improve efficiency.

Their weaknesses - if not addressed - will prevent companies from realising these benefits, and will hinder and cost them in turnover and poor productivity.

The key is facilitating communication and understanding. For companies that build bridges between Gen Y and current managers, between Gen Y and future employees, and between Gen Y and each other, will succeed. The companies that don't, will find the differences between their employees widen with each successive generation.

A Unique Research perspective

Much has been written about Gen Y since they joined the workforce, and specifically on ways to manage them. Case studies have illuminated managerial tactics that work, and programs that haven't. HR resource reports have examined Gen Y's unique staffing costs. Recruiters have recommended ways to identify the best and most likely to succeed Gen Y candidates.

However, all of these reports have been written with a global perspective, lumping all Gen Y's into one category, and neglecting the unique regional differences embedded in each country's own population.

The regional differences for China's Gen Y are significant. Most notably, China's Gen Y is large, currently in very great demand, and part of one of the world's fastest growing, largest, most powerful and most rapidly changing economy.

As a result, this study breaks China's Gen Y population apart from the rest and holds them as a unique group of employees. It examines China's Gen Y from the perspective of China's managers and employees.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted from October 2010 to April 2011. It was comprised of three phases. The first phase was an online survey aiming at understanding the

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differences between Gen Y and other generations in terms of motivation, attitude, behaviour and commitment. In order to obtain a representative sample, quotas were designed on age, gender and city of residence. 2,480 valid questionnaires were collected as a result, with respondents' demographics details as below:

The second phase was a qualitative study aiming at understanding managers' perception of Gen Y and the challenges in managing them. Two online focus groups were run, each with 20 managers from Shanghai and Beijing who participated in a 7-day online discussion. There were also two traditional face-to-face focus groups, one in Beijing and one in Shanghai with managers of Gen Y.

During the third phase of the project, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight organisations that have large workforce born in 80's and have best practices in recruiting, managing, motivating and retaining Gen Y. These case studies form an essential part of this white paper.

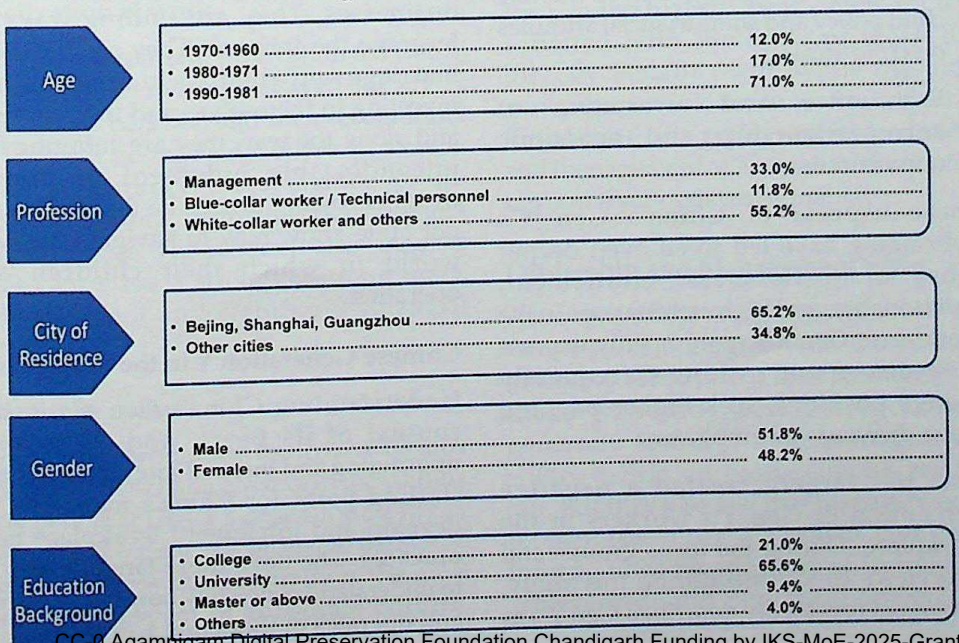
Defining Generation Y in China

Generation Y's Social and Cultural Upbringing

Generation Y in China is unique because of its upbringing in an unparalleled period of progress, industrialisation, economic and cultural openness, and global awareness in China's history. Rarely has so much change occurred in just one generation:

- In 1977, China resumed its college entrance examination system after the end of the Cultural Revolution
- In 1978, China opened its door to the international community
- In 1979, China implemented the one-child policy
- In 1993, job allocation after graduation from university ceased to be guaranteed to young people

Results with Respondents' Demographics Details



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- In 1998, widespread state-owned enterprise reform released a number of state workers into the private job marketplace
- In 1999, Chinese universities began to expand dramatically
- In 2004, property prices began taking off, setting the economic bar higher and higher each year for financial security and the possibility of marriage and a family

Any one of these changes alone is capable of causing a widespread shift in a generation's mentality. However, taken together with an extremely fast rise in China's economic prosperity and the use of technology and the internet, they have given birth to a generation with unprecedented :

- Exposure to the world compared to generations before
- Access to economic and education resources compared to previous generations
- Indulgence by family, due to the one child policy and shifts in social attitudes on child-raising
- Experience and awareness of entrepreneurship and economic opportunities

These aspects of China's Gen Y's upbringing have led to an even deeper sense of restlessness, entitlement, individuality, and high expectations in the workforce. Gen Y's more openly express their discontent with jobs, frequently change positions, seek higher pay and make demands on employers.

This has largely created a negative perception of Gen Y's workers in the workplace. During the focus groups and interviews conducted during this study, managers repeatedly described Gen Y's as demanding, short-term in perspective, seeking to gain more than they give in their jobs, and possessing overly high expectations for promotion and salary from their companies.

However, there is also another side to China's Gen Y story. Gen Y is currently straddling old and new social norms. They are caught between the older generation's mentality of taking care of parents and buying a house and getting married and the reality of China's rising standard of living and price inflation. The economic pressure to succeed for themselves and their families rests on only one child's shoulders rather than spread out across siblings. They are as afraid of failure as they are of settling, and their age adds a simple level of immaturity that must be acknowledged.

Also, the rapid pace of change in China has left Generation Y without older mentors to look upon. Unlike in industrialised countries, in which the path to industrialisation is well worn, China's Gen Y's are doing many things for the first time. They are opening up new technology businesses. They are finding ways to leverage the Internet. They are delaying marriage and children in exchange for investing in themselves and their careers, and along the way, they are suffering the uncomfortable judgment of family members before them who themselves do not quite know how to navigate the new world in which their children are operating.

Chinese Generation Y in the Workplace

Understanding China's Gen Y's in the context of its peers, and its unique upbringing and internal motivations is the starting point for China's managers to develop and implement workplace best practices. The next, more tangible step is to understand concretely how Gen Y thinks and operates in the actual workplace.

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The data collected from 2,480 respondents in the first phase and 4 focus groups in the second phase provides a clear and concise snapshot of Gen Y's workplace motivations, thinking and priorities. It provides a foundation upon which companies can prioritise their initiatives for change, and implement new programs.

Recruiting

According to the study, companies need to start reorienting themselves towards Gen Y's right at the very start of the working relationship - at recruiting. According to those surveyed, Gen Y's (who are accustomed to and feel most comfortable in environments of clarity and information) feel that right upfront, company procedures are not clear enough; this is very telling of future expectations at work. In fact, only 30% agreed or strongly agreed that their own recruiting procedure was very clear. This was in stark contrast to the post 60's & 70's workers, who were largely satisfied with the clarity of their process.

Motivation at work

The most important motivation for Gen Y is career development, followed quickly by salary and benefits, and then recognition. It is worth noting that Gen Y's put much less importance on a chance to do interesting work, than career development opportunities. The research also suggests that Gen Y has a strong desire for quick advancement and significant financial rewards.

Corporate culture

Within the corporation itself, Gen Y's look for distinctive characteristics in the culture. It is here that Gen Y's desire for creativity becomes apparent. According to the study, Gen Y believes that creativity is the most important aspect of corporate culture, followed by collaboration and adaptability. Gen Y's opinions of its current employers are also very critical. Only 37.3% of survey respondents indicated that their corporate culture is indeed creative enough, and of the area they generally aspire least to - customer focus - Gen Y ranked their company's highest. The direct inversion of the relationship between this data suggests that Gen Y's are most critical of what they want the most, least critical of what they care about the least; this is another aspect of their general personality. It also suggests that opportunities to create creativity are necessary in any workplace employing Gen Y.

Satisfaction at work

Gen Y's are largely dissatisfied with their work, significantly more than their peers. Compared to other generations, they are very dissatisfied with salary and benefits, performance management, and learning and promotion. They are relatively less dissatisfied with leadership and management style than the generations above them. This continues to speak to their individualistic bent - they are least satisfied with the areas of work that directly benefit them, while the older generations look more to the collective functioning of a group and its leadership and management as a source of satisfaction beyond their own performance.

Leadership and Management Style

According to the study, more than 60% of Gen Y's did not agree with the positive attributes asked about their managers. Of those who did, Gen Y respondents generally feel that their managers are willing to help, are good examples, and are fair. But they also feel that managers need to provide more access to company information, recognition of individual achievement and periodical one-on-one

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discussion. For older generation managers, this is not as much the case.

This gap creates a risk that older generational managers may not recognise, respect and address the needs of the younger generation for a more hands-on management style.

The interviews with Gen Y managers shed more light on these attributes. According the respondents, Gen Y's at work operate best in creative corporate cultures that reward innovation and entrepreneurship and invest in their employee's advancement. They particularly perform well in collaborative, learning oriented environments with accessibility to managers.

Gen Y's apply their energy and talents best to tangible project-based collaborative problems. They are more flexible thinkers and problem solving oriented than the generations before. They have less respect for traditional hierarchical corporate cultures than previous generations, and are eager to have greater responsibility much faster than older employees. Unlike previous generations that understood that "paying dues" was part of any working environment, they respond very negatively to that attitude.

They are also not very customer focused, but instead, aspire to their own advancement and skill acquisition more. They are more interested in making a fast and positive impression on those that can promote them than they are on the customer (whether internal or external). While this makes them fast learners and eager on-the-job students, it takes energy away from their performance and service to customers.

Collaborating with Generation Y: Defining the Gap

The effects of these differences between Generation Y's behaviour and expectations in the workplace and those of post 60's and 70's employees becomes most apparent in the employee - manager relationship. It is imperative to breakdown its manifestations into tangible categories and then "define the gaps" in which the generational differences need to be bridged.

Here are a few important differences.

Manager and Generation Y have different work priorities. Managers largely feel that they are being forced to give many work incentives to Gen Y, but Gen Y is not giving back through maximum productivity. This creates an imbalance between expectations in job descriptions, responsibilities, and job satisfaction.

Managers want their Gen Y's to focus on customer-service in particular. They rank it very important to their companies' work, whereas Gen-Y's rank this very low on their work priority-list. Gen Y's prefer work that they feel more tangibly improves them. This creates the feeling in managers that Gen Y's aren't willing to rise to the company needs and the core needs of the clients.

Managers and Generation Y have different work personalities. In the workplace, Gen Y's are generally more aggressive - both positively and negatively - than the generation before. Managers of older generations are more accustomed to keeping their heads down and expecting their hard work to speak for itself. They are generally quieter and more diligent. However, they are also generally less creative and entrepreneurial in their attitudes. This creates a communication gap between them.

Managers and Generation Y have different work talents. Generation Y is more flexible, creative, technologically savvy, and wanting work that incorporates their spirit and vision. Less physical

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needs of earning money. Gen Y is also more socially and community minded. These talents are good for company evolution and culture in China.

Manager and Generation Y have different (largely negative) perceptions of each other. Gen Y generally thinks their managers pay them too little, are too opaque and formal, not frequent enough in their feedback and promote too slowly. Post 60's & 70's generally think Gen Y's are too impatient, demanding and not willing to work hard and learn and earn their money. They see Gen Y focused on self rather than the satisfaction of managers or customers.

Collaborating with Generation Y: Challenges to Change

It is worth noting that bridging these gaps in work expectations, perceptions, and preferences is no easy task. It requires change at the top first - amongst managers - which requires managers to take the first leap to understanding and acknowledging the differences between them and their Gen Y employees. It also requires managers to be trained to understand why it is important that they make an effort to change their management programs and style, rather than expecting Generation Y to fit into their way of thinking. Thirdly, it requires companies to invest heavily in teaching managers how to meet Generation Y's needs, how to communicate better, how to prioritise managing and mentoring in their workplace,

Conclusion

Generation Y in China provides unique management challenges for all companies. They are more individualistic than previous generations, more information oriented, more financial-gain oriented, and more demanding than their predecessors, many of whom are now managing them.

However, through understanding their generational history and meeting their needs and motivations directly, companies can not only manage these employees successfully, but also leverage their unique talents, creativity, motivation and comfort with technology.

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GEN Y IN THE WORK FORCE : PREPARING ORGANISATIONS FOR A VALUES AND CULTURE "CLASH"

RAJEEV DUBEY

Abstract

"Rise" is a bold attempt at Mahindra to achieve business transformation through a cultural transformation. Many initiatives deeply embedded in the company values and aimed specifically at Gen Y which constitutes almost 80% of their workforce — has reaped great business dividends.

The article takes us through some of their successful initiatives aimed at Gen Y. Constituting shadow boards — set up with the objective of giving young managers the opportunity to engage with Strategic issues of the company, Mahindra Social Option Plans — for facilitating large scale employee volunteerism in company activities & informal chat sessions called Fireside chats.

About the Author

Rajeev Dubey is the President (Group HR & After-Market) and Member of the Group Executive Board, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. His key focus areas are HR/IR initiatives for the Group, the After Market Sector whose three CEO's report to him, Corporate Communications, Government Relations and Infrastructure. In addition, he is on the Boards of several Group companies .

Earlier he had brilliant career with the Tata Group. Rajeev is an Economics graduate from St. Stephens College, Delhi University, and a PG from the Delhi School of Economics. He is also an MBA from the Yale School of Management with merits.

What is happening to our young people? They disrespect their elders, they disobey their parents. They ignore the law and riot in the streets, inflamed with wild notions. Their morals are decaying. "What is to become of them?"

Does this lament seem familiar? From Tahrir Square, Cairo to the streets of London and Birmingham, from the IITs to mofussil colleges in rural India, from Shanghai factories to Manesar, from politicians to CEOs, from HR Heads to middle-aged parents, this could be a quotation from any one of them.

But actually it is a quote from the Greek philosopher and thinker Plato, complaining about the youth of the day in ancient Greece more than two thousand three hundred years ago!

The point is that the "generational gap" has always existed (varying only in degree, intensity and specific form) and thank God for that! Progress and growth come only from challenging the status quo. But equally, the dynamics of change can be very painful and disruptive, and need not always lead to the betterment of human lives, especially in the short-run. That

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being said, clearly we are at a point of inflexion in human history and if organisations do not proactively prepare to meet the "values and culture clash" posed by the younger people in the workforce, market place and the communities that organisation operate in, there could be chaos and conflict instead of innovation and growth.

What are the major elements of this "values and culture" threat/opportunity posed by Gen Y (or whatever nomenclature we choose to call the "young" by)? At the risk of carrying coal to Newcastle (or Australia, if we are to update the idiom), let me summarise the Gen Y characteristics that emerge from the literature :

- Tech-savvy: they prefer email and text messaging over face-to-face contact
- Achievement oriented
- Team oriented
- Impatient and attention - craving
- Need work - life balance
- Search opportunities for advancement & career growth and need interesting & meaningful work
- Worried about the environment and society

This list could be expanded with more specifics, but essentially it reflects the following deeper needs:

A. Search for purpose & meaning

B. The desire to contribute, create and make a difference

C. The need for connection: with others and with their own selves

D. Concern for community and the environment

E. The need to be respected and listened to, for conversation and dialogue.

Looked at in this framework, (i.e. A to E above) it clearly indicates the contours of the organisation culture and leadership style (at all levels in the organisation) that can unleash the potential of the younger work force and convert the threat of a "value and culture clash" into a potent force for innovation and market success.

Having painted this broad and general framework, let me not pontificate theory or enter into a Socratic discourse (which I am neither competent nor inclined to do). However, "accoutred as I am", I will take the risk of plunging into the raging Tiber by describing how we are approaching this whole issue in the Mahindra Group. To do so, I will largely draw upon people practices that are being aligned to what we call the "RISE" initiative. You might wonder though, if you look at the needs expressed in points A to E above, whether they would equally reflect the needs of any person regardless of her age. This is not to argue that there is nothing different about the younger generation, but merely to note that they are mirroring in the technological and social context of our times, basic human needs and traits that have always existed and which Plato was complaining about in the first paragraph of this article.

The following diagram summarises the Mahindra RISE philosophy. It is a bold attempt to achieve business transformation through a cultural transformation, to build a DNA that uses the view of life contained in the "RISE pillars" i.e. Accept no limits, Alternate thinking and Driving positive change, to create success in the market place and, indeed, choose the markets we operate in.

At the core of this approach are, subject to alignment with the core values,

a. Empowerment

b. Positive Change (within the organisation and outside it, reflecting our commitment to Sustainability)

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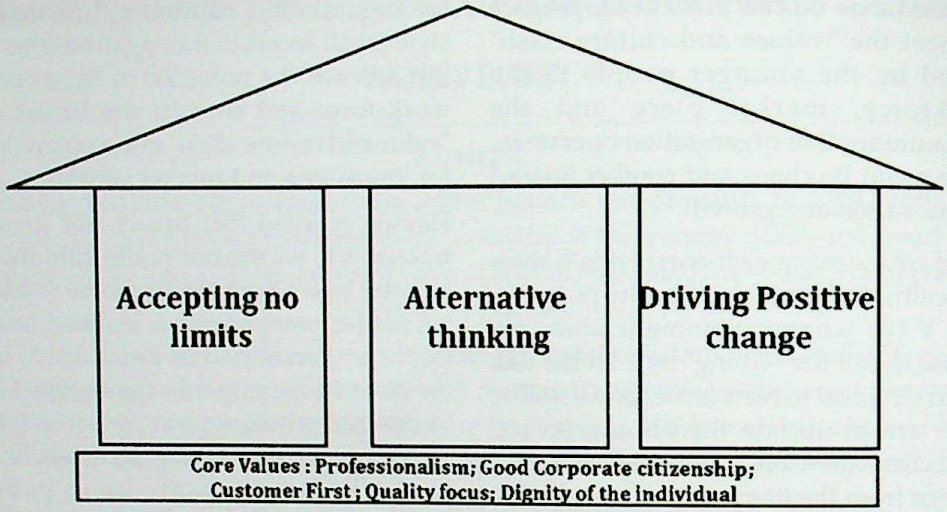
HOUSE OF MAHINDRA
Accepting no limits
Alternative thinking
Driving Positive change
Core Values : Professionalism; Good Corporate citizenship;
Customer First ; Quality focus; Dignity of the individual

c. Innovation

d. Stretching possibilities / boundaries

We believe this gives a powerful sense of purpose and meaning to the Mahindra Gen Y population, which exceeds 80% of our global workplace of 140.000 employees. Of course, the overall core purpose needs to be translated into business strategies and goals (we call them our 10X business plans) for RISE to have a tangible form that employees can relate to.

We have ensured that the RISE pillars are fed into the HR levers through the leadership competencies, recruitment, induction and on-boarding templates, performance management systems, talent management process and reward/recognition. A robust 2-way communication process facilitates this entire HR eco-system. In addition, we have identified 5 leadership behaviours required to bring RISE into the Mahindra DNA:

1) The Whole New Mind: bringing both left and right brain to any situation
2) Multiplying, not diminishing (energy, ownership, ideas, debate, passion)
3) Managing fear and leveraging failure (to encourage risk taking and hence innovation)
4) Mindfulness in the age of distraction
5) Generating Trust (through authenticity and walking the talk)

These too have been incorporated in the HR levers.

Given this Mahindra Way in which all employees participate, there are many initiatives aimed specifically at GenY to address the needs identified earlier in this article i.e. the need / search for purpose, creativity, connection, to be heard and consulted, and addressing societal / environmental concerns. Some of these initiatives are mentioned below:

I. Shadow Boards have been created in each business with the objective of giving young mangers the opportunity to engage with strategic issues that would normally be the domain of top management, and present their ideas to the Group Executive Board. Many of these proposals, both strategic and operational, have been implemented over the years.

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Shadow Boards typically have 7 to 9 members, who rotate every 2 years, so that a large pool of talented youngsters get an opportunity to interact with top management and make a difference. The Group Executive Board spends a day going through the Shadow Board presentations (which are projects typically worked on for 3 to 6 months under the mentorship and supervision of senior manager in the business), and select presentations are then show-cased in the annual Blue Chip Conference where the youngsters interact with the top 500 managers of the Group. Shadow Board membership has become a badge of honour, and an integral part of the overall Talent Management process of the Group. It has, in addition, given our businesses the benefit of plenty of lateral out-of-box thinking.

II. Mahindra ESOPs : Please read that as Employee Social Option Plans (and not stock options, though we are also quite aggressive in the use of the latter). This is a structured process of catalysing and facilitating large scale employee volunteerism in community activities, which focus on education for the girl child and youth from disadvantaged sections of society, environment with special emphasis on green cover (we plant one million trees every year) and water, and public health.

Thousands of young employees volunteer every year and for most of them these turn out to be crucible experiences in developing their leadership abilities and connecting with their own selves in a deep sense. All entry-level employees compulsorily go through this, while for serving employees it is voluntary (though highly desirable).

The following quote from one of our Global Recruits after her stay in the Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh will give you an idea of the power and the significance of ESOPs for Gen Y:

"I moved to Mumbai a year ago, recruited from an American university to join Mahindra's Global Recruit Program. Over the past 12 months, Mumbai has come to feel as much like home as Boston, but understanding Mumbai is a far cry from understanding India. When Mahindra added a rural project with the Naandi Foundation to the induction of new recruits this year, I asked to go along.

And as we became comfortable tucked under the eaves of village houses in the rain, our insights began to change. The cultural immersion in village life helped us ask the right questions-questions that come from the village, not the city.

Our past learning shouldn't hegemonise what we learn today. We had to stop trying to fit our observations into what we thought we knew. When you move across the world, across the country, or even just across the office, you also need to move away from your old perspective-to let insight flow from observation rather than prior knowledge."

Surveys show that our commitment to the triple-bottom-line is very important in attracting, retaining and actualising Gen Y, and ESOPs are an important plank of the Sustainability movement.

III. The Mahindra War Room:

The Mahindra Group's program called "The War Room" was first commissioned in the year 2007 and ever since then this strategy contest has become a cult Brand in 16 of India's top B-school campuses, with students awaiting the entire experience right from the launch on campuses to the Grand Finale. The strategic intent of this mega event is to provide an opportunity for India's best and brightest B-school minds to improve their strategising skills. Under this program, the Mahindra business leaders share challenges 'that keep

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them awake at night', which are then developed into Caselets and floated across the top B - Schools in India. After a rigorous evaluation process by senior management panelists from Mahindra, the top teams from the campuses are invited for the national finals.

The attending managers walk away with a huge tranche of ideas after rubbing shoulders with the best of young talent across India, and hopefully the young talent takes away an experience which enriches their leadership potential.

IV. Fireside Chats:

Inspired by US President Franklin Roosevelt's famous series of Fireside Chats held in the 1930's and 1940's to open direct lines of communication between the US President and his citizens, the Fireside Chats at M&M also open new lines of communication between top management and the young managers. It is a platform that allows an informal sharing of ideas and thoughts cutting across the boundaries of hierarchy. The Fireside Chats are conducted on a quarterly basis, and are attended by participants in the age-group 25- 35 years from across the Mahindra Group. These chats are telecast live on the intranet and are available for all to see.

The primary objective of the Fireside Chat is to provide a unique, compelling and differentiated value proposition for young employees to engage and connect with business leaders. It also helps establish a regular and informal channel of communication with younger minds in a freewheeling discussion on the company's vision, its future, strategic objectives, and any other insights.

V. Mahindra Auto Quotient (AQ) : was created to provide a platform for young ardent Auto enthusiasts to share their passion for automobiles. Popularly known as AQ, the quiz became an instantaneous hit with employees of the Automotive Sector in 2006. In 2008, AQ was extended to all employees in the Mahindra Group and later launched in engineering colleges all over India. Today, AQ is one of the most awaited and popular quizzes among young engineering minds and the winners of AQ are offered projects and internship opportunities.

These are but a few examples of efforts being made specifically to engage with Gen Y employees. But what really matters in the final analysis is the daily experience, the "One Day in the Life of ...". Gen Y is powerful stuff and like anything powerful, it can either create or destroy For Mahindra it is clearly seen as a tremendous opportunity to unleash human and organisational potential. The question is how genuinely open we are to new "normals" as they emerge, and how well we can overcome our tendency to control. For it is only by letting go, that we can enable young and fertile minds to reach for the stars.

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THE EVOLUTION OF GEN Y WORK FORCE

RADHAKRISHNAN NAIR

Abstract

The snake gourd is apt to grow crooked, if left alone. So, gardeners tie a stone to its end and the weight pulls it straight, as it grows longer and longer. The minds of young people too are apt to grow crooked under different negative influences. Its our duty to disciple them. In this article the author takes a different view than most in that he does not say: Gen Y have these needs so go ahead and cater to them. Instead the author argues that it is incumbent on elders, families, organization, government and society to influence and shape the values, attitudes of Gen Y and instill discipline in them.

About the Author

Radhakrishnan Nair is a product of XLRI, Jamshedpur. He is currently with Tata Group as chief Human Resources officer at Tata Steel. He has earlier worked at Indian Aluminium, Mahindra Ford, Citibank, SunTec, Tata Group.

What does it mean to deal with new generation workforce. I believe we make our own lives very complicated by believing that there is a Gen A or Gen Y workforce. Generations basically just refer to the same beings born in different circumstances.. If there is any variation in behaviour which is not necessarily very comforting, it is because earlier generations are not doing enough to groom or mentor the younger people We seem to be abdicating this responsibility, be it parents, teachers, and any others who need to show courage and play this role. The unfortunate part is that the ones who are responsible for grooming are themselves not groomed enough.

With specific reference to the Corporate world let us remember that if organisations want good quality employees, they have a role to play in the grooming of young ones much ahead of them becoming productive employees. In other words, they will need to start at least from academic institutions.

All of us - be it as parents, organisations, academicians, teachers and even society as a whole, have a collective responsibility of grooming our young to become responsible citizens, productive employees and empowered to carry forward the legacy of our society

There is need for us to say what has to be said when it comes to grooming the younger generation. When needed, a bitter pill needs to be taken. This is primarily what the Perfect One has to say for the development of the so called Gen Y.

The organisations that exist today and the kind of people who lead these

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organisations do not pay enough attention to the development of the raw material that comes into their organisations. While a lot of focus is given to the inert raw material in the form of plant, machinery and other inputs that go into production, no or not enough emphasis is given to human raw material. We see organisations taking some interest in developing students and their young employees — but unless this development is done at a holistic level, simply setting localised norms for development may harm the individual in the long run and certainly not play any role in the overall growth of the person. The current system runs the risk of making individuals as inert machinery with only one passion, the passion for money and benefits. The organisations are failing in their duty to help young people develop into individuals with character.

Educational institutions have the responsibility to give to society well educated persons who are competent and who are men and women of integrity and who can be relied upon to serve society with devotion and competence. The crisis in the educational field is well-known. Many attempts have been made to bring about changes in the educational system, but it is forgotten that what gives education its true value and significance is its moral and spiritual content. In a world in which many technical and scientific changes are taking place, a balance has to be maintained between modernity and spiritual traditions and heritage of the country. The link between education and employment, which has remained from the days of Macaulay has to be broken.

Education should be for life and not merely for earning a living.

Without emphasis on character, educational institutions have become the abodes of indiscipline and disorder. Who is responsible for this condition? Teachers who are unable to understand the workings of the minds of the students are worried about how to deal with the situation. The students have no sense of discipline or respect for teachers. Both students and teachers are confronted with managements who are not primarily concerned with the real purpose of education. The result is we have students who indulge in agitations and teachers who are discontented. The Corporate managements for their part complain against the Government, but it is not the teachers alone or the students or the management or the government who are to be held responsible for this state of affairs. At the higher levels of education the major problem is caused by politics and the holding of elections in college associations. Elections to student bodies should be dispensed away with. They invoke not only considerable waste of money, but result in divisions and conflicts between students. Instead of realising the harm that such an education system is doing, we in organisations tend to perpetuate this behaviour by creating similar systems that lead to divisions amongst the employees. There is belief amongst the policy makers in human matters, that human beings have to perpetually be aggressively competing against each other in order to excel. While in Management theories we have spoken about Theory Y and Theory Z, in reality all of us still manage organisations using Theory X.

Now to come back to our main topic of this article, how is this generation to be moulded.

1) The parents' duty in shaping students' character

The parents of the students have the first responsibility for developing in the young the right attitudes and behaviour. In the

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past, the family was the first institution in which the students imbibed the culture and traditions of the nation through stories about the great sages, saints and heroes of the past. By too much indulgence the parents are also allowing the students to have their own way and ignore what is good, noble and virtuous. It is the family that has the first responsibility to impart the essential values of life to enable them to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong, what is true and what is false.

Most of the problems in our country are created not by the uneducated or the illiterate, but mainly by the educated persons. The reason is the educated persons have not had the right type of education.

2) The change should begin at primary level

There is too much interference by the Government in the educational system, which accounts partly for the prevailing evils. Attempts to tinker with the system by altering the number of years at school and the number of years at college do not effect any fundamental changes. Whether it is 10 + 2 + 3 or 10 + 3 + 2 makes no difference to the end product of the system. The change in fact should begin from primary level when the children are in their most impressionable years. It is at that stage that discipline and moral values should be inculcated. Students who have been moulded on right lines in the early years by being filled with examples from our cultural heritage would develop into ideal citizens.

3) Obedience to discipline should come automatically

Patient effort and steady persistence are indispensable for the seniors. Their role in grooming the young ones is of extreme importancefor the nation. Though young minds may have got polluted by environment in which they have been brought up, this is no excuse for us to completely reject the person. The snake gourd is apt to grow crooked, if left alone. So, gardeners tie a stone to its end and the weight pulls it straight, as it grows longer and longer. The minds of young people too are apt to grow crooked, under the influence of the sensuous films, the hollow hypocritical atmosphere created by the elders, the lure of glitter and glamour and of a false sense of adventure and fame. So, organisations and leaders of such organisations have to attach the stone of discipline and make them grow straight and true.

The stone should not be too heavy, lest it snap the gourd in two! Avoid extremes, at all times, in all cases. Disciplinary rules have to be well thought out and adapted to the age-group they wish to correct. The atmosphere must be so charged that obedience to discipline comes automatically, with full heart. Such discipline will shape good leaders for the organisation as well as for the nation. Unlike the present generation of leaders, these can inspire and guide the people along fight lines. They have also to be good followers; fine soldiers make fine generals. Young apprentices of peace become pillars of peace, champions of peace.

4) Regulate the habits

Food determines to a large extent health and intelligence, emotion and impulse. Set limits to the quality and quantity of food, as well as to the number of times it is consumed and the timings. Recreation too has to be moral and elevating, in the company of the righteous and God-fearing. The real purpose of grooming is ignored by parents, teachers and leaders alike. Parents wish that their sons and daughters

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must secure a University Degree, by hook or crook, because it is a status symbol. Teachers wish that a high percentage of their pupils must pass the examination, without giving them any significant attention while teaching, or while not teaching!

Each of the so called Generation Y person is in precious trust, so far as the groomer is concerned. The person should therefore be honest, in the execution of duties, for, the personal example has influence on the persons that he or she is trying to influence.

Speech is also a habit. To be able to grow in life in a real manner, the practice of silence is extremely important. Silence is invaluable and the younger generation must be asked to practice it. See that they do not get too agitated or depressed. The pendulum will start to swing only when the clock is keyed up. Let them keep their desire under control; do not key them up. Elders, politicians, leaders, and teachers should ensure that they do not inflame their passions, and enslave them to anger and passion, as they are doing now.

In an organisation, the leadership must ensure that the younger employees are engaged well in a manner that enables their personal evolution while they help the organisation succeed. The younger generation needs help in starting on this journey of evolution early and hence completion of education can only be considered as achieved when we develop the skill to distinguish between what is good and what is not, and then, plan out ways and means to secure the good and avoid the evil. When we clamour for rights, we must lend shoulders to carry the obligations too. Instead, if young people plunge into the streets behind the leaders who use them for their ends, they are harming their own careers and harming politics too. And, imagine the agony of the parents who build castles of hope and live precariously, so that their children may learn and earn.

5) Both the older generation and the younger generation deceive

If we look at the current organisational processes, we find that they are just an extension of the education system. Teachers in colleges are concerned now only with the percentage of passes; so, they teach only answers to questions, which according to their guesses will appear at the examination. It is all a gamble. Subjects in the curriculum are not taught, fully and well. The pupils forget what they have crammed for the occasion; they are none the better, even if they are declared 'passed.' Their brains become empty once they have poured out the contents on the answer papers. Subjects of study are prescribed with adequate syllabuses, because they are useful equipment; they train processes of thought, they help in learning further. That is why they are included in the curriculum and when the degree is conferred, everyone believes that the student is the master of those subjects. So, teachers deceive the public, if they do not teach the entire subject, and students deceive the public if they do not get the subject imprinted on their minds, ever available for use.

In an organisational set up the curriculum is set in the form of a business plan and the employees are encouraged to achieve the same at any cost. This in turn leads to unhealthy competition and an overall culture of violence within the organisation. The ones who are considered as doing well are not necessarily the ones who are making the organisation a place that is worth being in.

The benchmark of success in organisations must be really lofty. For example, the person who may need to be encouraged is the one who works hard at making his colleagues succeed. In due course, the

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organisation itself will be seen as a highly evolved place. This in turn will help correct defects in time and to the full. The younger generation must never find they are idle and unoccupied. Engagement does not mean sitting in front of a computer and coding or perpetually working on the shop floor. Engagement is the complete usage of talents in the individual. If organisations cannot help young people discover their calling, then the organisation cannot be much different from a mercenary organisation.

6) Quality and not quantity should be the goal

You know that you can draw cheques on a bank, whenever you need money, provided you have enough current deposit therein. If the bank goes bankrupt, it will be a disaster. The educational system is the bank, on which the nation draws a cheque whenever it wants strong reliable skilled workers. If it goes bankrupt, as it has very nearly gone today, it is a national disaster. The current focus on churning out engineers, doctors and MBAs by the kilos must stop. The so called top education institutes have made education a short term business proposition. Students do not go to an institution to study and build themselves into people who want to serve - rather the focus is on getting the best paying jobs. If the system is overhauled and lubricated, the next generation will be assured of good leaders and, what is equally essential, along with good followers.

These are not my words and this is not an article written by me, these are words of my Divine Master. I have quite shamelessly picked up from what HE has taught me through discourses and through writings. I have made some changes to make it suitable for the Corporate readers. I believe that even this act is based on HIS motivation. Whatever name we may give to the younger population, the fact remains, that they need guidance and support and it is only the ones who are themselves evolved that can help the evolution of young people. I will be failing in my duty if I fail to thank my colleague Aditya Ahuja, Head TAS, Group HR, who painstakingly went through the draft and made some changes that made this article a lot more readable.

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GEN Y @ TATA CHEMICALS

B SUDHAKAR

Abstract

Some of us would recollect ringing a bell at the local pizza outlet on our way out, if we had enjoyed ourselves and were happy customers. Have you ever heard of a Bell that we can ring in our office to share our joy?

Tata Chemicals has done exactly that. CheerRing is a brass bell that the company has hung across its offices. Any employee wanting to announce any good news about personal, team or company achievement or even a fun announcement has a go at the Cheer Bell. The bell chimes for good times!

This is just one amongst the wide variety of initiatives that have been launched at Tata Chemicals to engage with Gen Y. This article looks at the innovative and catchy branding of these exciting employee engagement initiatives. In depth, diagnostic surveys carried out in the organization helped to identify the needs and aspirations of the younger generation. Mazedaar Mondays to drive away the Monday blues to Fun Fridays to liven up the weekend mood, and Home Shanti Home an initiative to promote work-life balance are one many exciting initiatives discussed in this article.

About the Author

B Sudhakar, Chief human resources officer, B Sudhakar is the Chief Human Resources Officer at Tata Chemicals Limited.

He worked at reputed organisations like Samtel, Ceat, SOL Pharmaceuticals, Nagarjuna Fertilisers and Reliance Infocomm - before joining Tata Chemicals in February 2002.

He is a postgraduate in Business management from the Institute of Management Technology (IMT) at Ghaziabad, India.

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engagement initiatives. In depth, diagnostic surveys carried out in the organization helped to identify the needs& aspirations of the younger generation. Mazedaar Mondays to drive away the Monday blues to Fun Fridays to liven up the weekend mood , and Home Shanti Home an initiative to promote work life balance are one many exciting initiatives discussed in this article.

What did we do to understand the Gen Y?: Background

We did an internal research with existing employees on one side and did desk research from external sources to understand Gen Y.

Internal Findings:

Our own dipstick has shown that the Gen Y is optimistic about new possibilities and the future, has a desire and drive for entrepreneurship and making a difference and has a keen sense of competition both regional and global. Their focus is quick growth and they have a deep interest and pride in owning state-of-the-art technology. The key insight has been that they want more money, faster. The focus has also shifted from "Family First to Me First". We found they are ambitious, want to grow fast, come under peer pressure a lot, prefer to be independent (as against inter dependence), quick to learn and difficult to forgive.

External Findings:

A research conducted by a leading firm brought out significant characteristics of this generation employees;

- Sustainable: over 90% want an environmentally aware workplace
- Flexible: over 50% prefer to work flexibly and chose when to work
- Mobile: over 75% prefer to be mobile rather than static workers
- Life Long Learning Experience: The reasons for choosing a company are:

  1: Opportunities for Learning

  2: Work-Life Balance

  3: Best friends at work
- Peer to peer interaction, quick collaboration and learning from others is the way to get the work done and achieve growth
- Type of work cannot be isolated from its impact, company's reputation, and salary paid
- Desire for impactful work, higher level of contribution and entrepreneurship
- It's about differentiation: How different am I compared to others...Better, smarter and more influential
- Work environment is a prime attractor as it enhances employee image and offers prestige

Keeping in mind these attributes, Tata Chemicals embarked on a journey to prepare to face the challenges of Gen Y.

Some successful initiatives:

In December 2007, we realised that due to the large number of business initiatives, employees were spending more time on meetings, travel and in front of the computer rather than interacting with each other. We launched various initiatives to counter these.

Year of people was a programme started in 2008 as a means of building people interactions and fostering a conducive work environment. With the intent of connecting people, TCL introduced a series of initiatives to keep people informed about what is happening in the company, and to ensure that they feel a greater sense of involvement and bonding with the company.

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Friday Talkies was an initiative that declares the first and fourth Fridays of the month as Home Station days. Unless a person is on an extended tour, travel on these days is to be avoided to ensure that employees can spend time with their families. Also, meetings, seminars or training programmes that involve outstation travel are not to be scheduled on these days.

Home Shanti Home is a programme that encourages employees to leave the office on time every day. All offices have a lights-off each evening and working beyond 6.30 pm on any day because of a work exigency must have the prior approval of the head of the establishment. It was a super hit in the manufacturing sites. This is one of the major successes in our sites and offices - very unique to manufacturing industry.

These initiatives seek to ensure a harmonious work-life balance. http://www.tatachemicals.com/life_@_tcl/work_environment.htm - top

Fun@work

TCL takes the concept of fun at work quite seriously. The company provides a number of opportunities for employees and their families to enjoy themselves and show off their soft skills. Youngsters have been given freedom to design and rollout activities to bring in vibrancy in sites and offices. Budgets were allotted to implement the ideas generated by the youngsters. This has led to many interesting initiatives like adventure clubs, interest groups and so on.

Oorja is an annual cultural festival aimed at enhancing learning and development, and cementing the culture of responsiveness and teamwork within the 3,500-strong family of TCL employees spread across India. Introduced in 2003, the project offers a platform for the company's employees to display their talent while encouraging them to sharpen their competitive spirit and sense of achievement.

The festival is spread across the TCL facilities in Mumbai, Mithapur in Gujarat, Babrala in Uttar Pradesh, Haldia in West Bengal and all other satellite offices. There are three mini Oorjas and one mega Oorja event every year. The mini Oorjas feature drawing and essay contests, debates, quiz competitions and other activities across the TCL locations. The mega Oorja has a theatre-based festival as its highlight, with a theme that is of importance to the entire organisation.

Employees enact thematic skits based on a given topic. These skits are presented at the regional events and at the national function. The theme for 2008 was 'The human touch of chemistry', an idea that TCL has taken to heart, and it was one of the most successful in the Oorja series. Innovation, Globalisation, SHE (safety, health and environment), Values, Business Excellence and biodiversity have been among the other subjects covered in this manner.

Oorja inculcates a shared sense of purpose among TCL employees. Theatre has become a means to move beyond regular channels of communication, such as the intranet and newsletters, and reach a diverse audience through a more interactive and animated medium of communication. Youngsters found this very attractive to showcase talent. It brought them closer to one another.

Cutting through organisational hierarchies, employees display their creative skills at the Oorja events, bringing alive the theme in focus and leaving a

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lasting impact on the audience. Every year approximately 7,000 people - employees and their families - get involved in Oorja initiatives. Oorja has helped TCL fashion an environment that stimulates fresh ideas and innovative thinking away from the routine of daily work, and energises the entire enterprise.

Fun Fridays and Mazeddar Mondays

In 2010, TCL added an interesting edge to the company's people initiatives by introducing Fun Fridays and Mazeddar Mondays at the TCL head office and regional offices. The idea was to drive away Monday morning blues and end the week on a fun and exciting note.

A series of activities ranging from Friday dressing, appreciation days, short movie screenings, contests, quizzes, online puzzles, interactive games and competitions are planned for every Friday and Monday. With more than 20 activities like the Ozone Day snakes and ladders game, Independence Day quiz, Kudogram day and Kryptic number quiz successfully executed and received enthusiastically by the employees.

Mood monitor

This is another very successful and highly innovative initiative launched by TCL. The physical Mood monitor is a cute, bright yellow device that allows every employee to indicate his/her mood, by simply moving a hand. The idea is to enable employees to help lift the spirits of a sad or angry colleague and lend a helping hand when they see someone puzzled or restless.

Today, every employee at TCL who has a workstation assigned to him / her has a Mood monitor. This initiative has received a phenomenal response across TCL with not just employees, but also visitors to our offices who request Mood monitors to carry back home.

The online Mood monitor, or K-monitor (Knowledge monitor) as it is also known, is a programme that displays a new question on the computer screen as soon a user logs onto the network every morning. Topics range from issues of organisational significance, opinion polls on organisational initiatives and information on various aspects of the organisation, to questions on general awareness, news, current affairs, history, etc. Responses received from around 1,000 employees daily are then analysed, and an e-mail with the results of the Mood monitor along with the correct response and relevant informative feedback is sent to all employees. Employees are also invited to contribute questions to the Mood monitor. Creating awareness about key themes like our CoC, SHE, VMV, community initiatives, products and services, the Tata group, etc

CheerRing

It is a brass bell called that has been hung at TCL offices in Mumbai, Noida, Ahmedabad and Pune. Any employee wanting to announce any positive, good and happy news about a personal, team or company achievement, birthday and fun announcements, etc, needs to ring the bell. As we at TCL like to put it, the bell chimes for good times! A direct outcome of this initiative is a surge in energy, excitement and positivity in the office.

TCL also celebrates Diwali, the New Year, birthdays celebrations with a palpable gusto, making the organisation a truly vibrant and exciting place to work in.

Clubs

TCL offices have several special interest clubs, wherein employees sharing common passions and interests, get together and

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take the lead in planning activities around their area of interest.

In keeping with the TCL credo of the 'Human touch of chemistry', the TCL HOPE (Harnessing Opportunities for People Empowerment) Volunteering club has been working successfully with NGOs in several cities. With around 50 members in Mumbai and Noida, the club works to spread awareness on themes like health, hygiene and the environment. Donation drives aptly titled 'TCL shares because TCL cares' are conducted from time to time to generate support for various NGOs and causes.

XPLORERS, the TCL Mumbai adventure club, was started by a group of young, enthusiastic TCL employees with a passion for the outdoors and adventure.

Social Media

We have launched TCL facebook. It has been our experience that this has been very well received and lot of conversations happen. Many interest groups were created and even ex employees became members and serves as a very powerful media to relate to the next gen.

Not so successful Initiative:

We assumed that youngsters need to be integrated into the existing culture of the organisation and so a programme has been designed to integrate the youngsters. This programme provided insight into the history of the company, cultural pillars of the company and was run by employees who have been in the company for long. However, this was not successful as the experiences of the youngsters in the programme (temporary system) and the actual experience in the work space (permanent system) was no similar. This led to dissonance. Detailed analysis led to the conclusion that the assumption was wrong in the first place. Now we are focusing on seniors to walk the extra mile to understand and empathise with Gen Y. This shift now is the best thing happening to the company.

Conclusion

It has been our experience that organisations need to prepare the existing employees far more to appreciate and relate to the Gen Y than expecting the Gen Y to be like the earlier generation. It is equally important that we need to give space to the Gen Y to design / conceive newer initiatives and implement the same in the organisation. It is important to give the freedom and resources for them to actively experiment in the organisation. We need to enable them to create the organisation of tomorrow that is sustainable. Betting on them is very important, instead of discounting them as not the same as the earlier generation and blaming them for the incompatibility. Employees from Gen Y also need to be more respectful for the earlier generation and manage the change in an inclusive manner. Unless both walk that extra mile the race will not be won. The journey is on.. and learnings are continuous.

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ORGANISATION STRATEGY TO ATTRACT AND MOTIVATE GENERATION Y

SAUMEN CHAKRABORTY and SAURYA CHAKRABORTY

Abstract

"In the current economic climate, with the world still caught in a post recession funk, the importance of monetary incentives cannot be disregarded", say the authors of this article while explaining various aspects that motivate Gen Y and what should organizations do to attract them. The article discusses some of the more difficult aspects of gen Y characteristics like "desire to be a hero", Impatience and expect respect. The article draws insights form several contemporary researches on Gen Y traits and makes a systematic assessment of those traits in designing organization's responses to Gen Y.

About the Authors

Saumen Chakraborty is President and Global Head of Quality, HR and IT, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. With honours in Physics as a topper at Visva-Bharati University, he went on to pursue Management from the IIM, Ahmedabad. His career spans across CMC, C-DOT, Eicher, Tecumseh and Dr. Reddy's.

Saurya Chakraborty belongs to Generation Y. He is currently pursuing his MBA in HR from XLRI, Jamshedpur. Saurya has got his dual degree of B E (Hons.) in Chemical Engineering and M Sc in Chemistry from BITS, Pilani in 2010. He has done his two semester internship training with IICT and Mylan (Matrix) Pharma and two summer projects with Mysore Paper Mill and Dr. Reddy's Lab.

He has got 2 publications to his credit in International Journals.

Generation Y, defined as those born after 1980, is now rapidly becoming the mainstream of the workforce of an organisation. In what is an unprecedented scenario, the work force today comprises members across four generations — The Traditionalists (born between 1925-1946), The Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation

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X (1965-1980) and Generation Y (1980 onwards). Analysing the factors that motivate Generation Y, and comparing them across generations present in the workforce today, can help harness the potential of this dynamic new entrant.

Before delving into an assessment of the common attributes shared across Generation Y, let us attempt some sort of historical analysis, which might provide a context for understanding their motives. According to Tammy Erickson, author of several HBR articles on the issue, previous generations, especially in India, grew up with options still limited by a sluggish economy. Success was defined for them by moving out of the country, a trend that has only recently seen a reversal. While Boomers in the West grew up as fundamentally competitive, the trend in India was to establish oneself as a functional societal unit above all else. Entrepreneurial drive was low, and democracy was still being established. Generation X brought the first reality check to the west. The first generation of "latch key kids", X'ers internalised the possibility that many of the institutions in their lives — whether marriage or corporate employment - could disappear. As a result, it is logical that self-reliance became an important life value — a desire to keep multiple options open if something bad were to happen. X'ers are generally mistrustful of institutions, loyal to their friends, and dedicated to being good parents. (Generational Differences Between India and the U.S., Tammy Erickson, HBR, 2009).

In India, despite the gradual economic liberalisation, the trend was still to seek employment abroad. This was the ultimate motivation, as evinced by the fact that nearly 75% of all graduates of the IIT's at the time moved or settled abroad. Thus differences existed amongst previous generations, but Generation Y shares common traits across borders.

One interesting conclusion that can be drawn from the aforementioned historical analysis is the similarities between The Baby Boomers and The Traditionalists in the West and Generation Y in India today. The former faced a robust economy whose coffers, especially in the US, opened up with considerable emphasis on production of consumer goods. The 1950's American family unit rapidly evolved into a 2 car, one television per family unit. In India, the first two five year plans laid out in the same decade focused on heavy manufacturing. The decade post liberalisation, with the rapid expansion of the economy, creation of wealth and growth of media closely mimic the growth of the former. This has had a significant impact on the ambitions of Indian Millenials. Author Bill Bryson notes that The 50's were a decade of great optimism for the US, and marked the beginning of the Great American Middle Class Dream. Similar ambitions mark the burgeoning Middle Class in India today. One distinct advantage Indian Millenials have though is their relative abundance in terms of population. World over, the population is ageing. In the US, UK and Canada, over a third of all employees are set to retire by 2012. In comparison, the Generation Y in India comprises nearly half the population. However, poor literacy rates hamper their employment readiness. (Johnson & Johnson Annual Generation Y in the workplace Report, 2010)

Having understood the demographic characteristics, let us try and assess what Generation Y means as entity, both in terms of attributes and in terms of work ethic. A 2005 survey by Deloitte Consulting Services ("Who are the Millenials, aka Generation Y?, 2005) listed the following attributes :

i. Work well with friends and on teams
ii. Collaborative, resourceful and innovative thinkers
iii. Love challenges
iv. Seek to make a difference

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v. Desire to be a hero
vi. Impatient
vii. Thrive on flexibility and space to explore
viii. Partner well with mentors
ix. Value guidance
x. Expect respect

The organisation strategy to attract and motivate Generation Y can be articulated with specific focus on each of the above attributes:

i. Work well with friends and on teams

Having a best friend at the work place also has direct correlation with the overall engagement level with the organisation. It has been a good practice to take the alumni from a specific campus along during the campus selection process as a strategy to attract the current batch where the alumni would inspire high level of credibility. While this helps in attracting them to the organisation, the presence of a buddy system (where someone outside of the formal reporting line acts as a friend) helps in motivation and engagement. Since Generation Y works well as teams, it could be prudent to engage them on several team assignments as a part of their socialisation and induction program before they settle down to a specific role in the organisation. It is important to remember that they are very obsessed with the quality of the role and clarity on the deliverables of work they will be doing. Many already have in mind what they want to do at an early stage of their careers and they want to feel good about that. Hence, the organisations must sell the role to them and keep their preference in mind while allocating roles.

ii. Collaborative, resourceful and innovative thinkers

Various end-to-end organisation processes actually need smooth inter-collaboration, resourcefulness and innovative thinking of cross-functional team members across the value chain. These specific attributes of Generation Y can be best leveraged by organisations by actively engaging them in simplifying and improving current business processes. Organisation should be flexible to explore such ideas and give a free hand to execute them while taking precautions that all consequent implications are well thought through. The freedom and space that could be provided to Generation Y to collaborate effectively across functions and business units and bring their resourcefulness and innovative thinking in translating idea to execution, coupled with timely recognition of such contribution will act as a great motivator to Generation Y.

iii-v. Love challenges, Seek to make a difference and Desire to be a hero

Those organisations that believe that anybody at any level can make a difference would significantly benefit from these specific traits of Generation Y. There has to be a mechanism for workforce to surface problems on the table and seek contributions from others in order to solve them. Again this has to be backed up by appropriate recognitions and rewards, so that the segment of Generation Y, who take on the challenges and really make a difference, gets appreciated and noticed as "Talent". The word of caution here would be to refrain from one-upmanship on the part of any single individual in his or her earnest desire to be a hero. Enough diligence has to be applied on the process of problem solving and its effect and to check whether the problem is eliminated from the root preventing reoccurrence. This would help Generation Y to avoid "Band-Aid" (short-cut) approach. At the same time, stimulating challenges and competitive mindset would help both the organisation and the "Talent".

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vi. Impatient

There are both pros and cons of this specific personality trait of Generation Y that differentiate themselves from the rest. This has direct impact on the stability/ continuity of workforce in the organisation. Impatience to get quick results can enhance the speed and agility of the organisation. But without appropriate processes, ownership and involvement of everyone else, the benefit could be short lived. Impatience may facilitate someone to get into the accelerated growth trajectory of the organisation. But sometimes it could lead to faster differentiation, higher filtration rate and a possible mismatch of talent readiness with opportunity basket. There is a growing acceptance in the Indian Industry today that the talent can be fast tracked to highest leadership level even in their early 30s. But it could be only a few who could make that cut and reach there. Even some of these people who taste early success in their life may find it difficult to sustain their motivation and continue with perseverance for the rest of their career. Hence, while in a natural process of emotional maturity one would develop the trait of patience, excessive correlation between speed and result needs to be dealt more diligently by the organisation. Sometimes speed is illusory. One gets perception of moving fast while in reality, it could be otherwise. Hence, the organisation can use the specific trait of Generation Y to its advantage but may face with disadvantages, if not dealt with appropriately.

vii. Thrive on flexibility and space to explore

As a 'transformational' generation, Generational Y is used to staying connected 24/7. They are more technology savvy and like to experiment with new things. They are also lifestyle oriented, self reliant and entrepreneurial. These attributes distinguish them from their siblings and predecessors. As can be already identified from the above given assessment survey, one of the key motivators for Generation Y, from the workplace, is the flexibility to work where and when they want. This is enabled by technological advancements that enable employees to be connected at all times, thereby affording flexibility of work and location. Also, demographic data shows a greater number of women entering the workforce than ever before, which makes flexibility a key aspect of work. They are also no more only career centric people. They get motivated by things like fun team outings, annual events, etc., where they get to show their talents and connect with their colleagues in a more informal setup. Facilities like gym, crèche, cafeteria and other employee friendly schemes and policies also act as motivating factors.

viii. Partner well with mentors

While the new entrants could have buddies in the organisation, once they settle down to a role, the organisation can provide the opportunity of proper mentorship. Those privileged to have very good mentors during studies and professional career are always better prepared in terms of readiness to accept higher level of responsibilities. The personal traits of Generation Y whereby they partner well with mentors can be leveraged well by the organisations in its Talent Management and Leadership Development processes. The mentors could also be used effectively both as a listening post as well as a channel to provide right feedback. This trait can be properly leveraged to improve engagement level.

Another distinguishing aspect of Generation Y's work ethic is the leaning towards an informal training experience. Survey and analysis conducted by Training Magazine in 2011, identified that nearly

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59% of all the "Millenials" surveyed considered advancing their knowledge as a primary career goal. The majority of respondents also attributed the ideal source of their learning and efficacy to outside programs and informal training. Thus, in order to motivate the new workforce, one needs to eschew the extant formal training methods. The emphasis must be laid on developing and sustaining a learning organisation, which will attract and motivate the new lot of employees.

ix-x. Value guidance and Expect respect

As part of its commitment to the staff members and associates of the organisation it is prudent to have the value of respect for individual as a core value of the organisation. The self esteem stands very relevant in case of Generation Y (if not for everyone) and that can only will reinforced by a strong organisation culture where every individual's views are respected, dignities are upheld, expressions are uninhibited, initiatives are encouraged and each looks forward to Monday for having fun/enjoyment while he/she works. It is one hygiene factor that is taken for granted by Generation Y and no leadership can prosper by adopting either "rule by fear" or a "demand loyalty style".

The appeasement orientation also does not help the organisation. Hence the only leadership style that helps build the organisation culture is by inspiring, involving and respecting all its employees.

The respect factors however must not be confused with either 'meeting expectation' or 'building relationship'. As a leader, one has to drive changes; demand performance and even take unpleasant decisions. By doing so quite overtly someone must not be construed to be 'disrespectful'. One can challenge assumptions, criticise some one's ideas, give negative feedback, reprimand sub-ordinate for non-performance and argue vehemently with colleagues on an organisation issue - those are not indicative of disrespect in any way. The disrespect is shown when one is not willing to listen to someone else's views (brush aside). The disrespect is shown by condemning, suspecting someone's integrity without proof, exemplifying ego-eccentricity and above all by dictating terms that affect freedom of expression, spontaneity, self-initiatives and creativity.

Having discussed the factors that distinguish Generation Y, lastly one must take into cognisance the factors that cut across Generations as extrinsic motivators. As Dr. David Brookmire notes in his research on "How to Motivate Gen Y", cash and bonuses still reign supreme. While these can be considered to be 'hygiene factors', research still points to the fact that they far outweigh the motivational factors commonly attributed to Generation Y. Thus while deciding employee incentive schemes, one must still pay utmost importance to cash bonuses and bonus pay increases. In the current economic climate, with the world still caught in a post recession funk, the importance of monetary incentives cannot be disregarded.

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MARKETING HR PROGRAMS TO GEN Y: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM CONSUMER GOODS MARKETING?

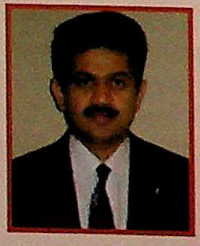
SREEKANTH K

Abstract

Do advanced marketing strategies and tools like Conjoint Analysis and Product Differentiation have a place in HR? Can HR practioners learn a thing or two from these practices?

This article argues that corporate experience in product marketing offers valuable lessons for HR practioners. Over the last few years, HR leaders have shown an ever-increasing interest in Employment Branding and strategies to differentiate themselves in the crowded employment market. Taking this a step ahead, the article explains how employee value propositions can be created using the conjoint analysis method, using two key dimensions for building HR products - importance & utility.

About the Author



Sreekanth is an experienced HR professional, with a diversity of experience across industries, geographies and roles, having worked with TVS Motors, Phillips, General Electric and Toyota. Sreekanth is qualified in TQM and Six Sigma and is passionate about the comprehensive role that HR can and must play in delivering business results.

Traditional HR practices are increasingly giving way to a new product-based approach to the labour market. Corporate experience in product marketing offers a valuable perspective for HR practitioners— developing and selling HR programs and services are not unlike developing and selling a product. To build or renew Human Capital effectiveness programs, companies must seek to develop compelling HR programs, communicate the value to the employees and establish and maintain a competitive employment brand and effective services to its HR customers (Employees & Managers). The first step to managing Gen Ys are understanding them and what drives Gen Ys to think and act in ways that often may seem different from how you think or behave. Once you understand them, you'll be able to apply this knowledge to your recruiting and other talent managing efforts.

Generation Y, also known as the Millennial Generation (or Millennials), Generation Next, Net Generation, Echo Boomers, describes the demographic cohort following Generation X. The term *Generation Y* first appeared in an August

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1993, *Ad Age* editorial to describe teenagers of the day, which they defined, at that time, as separate from Generation X. "Generation Y" alludes to a succession from "Generation X." Characteristics of the generation vary by region, depending on social and economic conditions. However, it is generally marked by an increased use and familiarity with communications, media, and digital technologies. In most parts of the world, its upbringing was marked by an increase in a neo-liberal approach to politics and economics. Howe and Strauss maintain that they use the term *Millennials* in place of *Generation Y* because the members of the generation themselves coined the term, not wanting to be associated with Generation X. According to the authors' 1997 book, *The Fourth Turning*, modern history repeats itself every four generations; approximately 80–100 years. The authors of the book mention that the four-cycles always come in the same order. The first one, the *High cycle*, occurs when a new order or human expansion is developed, replacing the older one. The next cycle is called the *Awakening*. More spiritual than the previous, this is a time of rebellion against the already established order. The third cycle is known as the *Unraveling*, when elements of individualism and fragmentation take over society, developing a troubled era which leads directly to the *Fourth Turning*, an era of crisis dominating society during which a redefinition of its very structure, goals, and purposes is established.

Each cycle has its archetypes, the four having the following one defined as: *Prophet*, *Nomad*, *Hero*, and *Artist*. According to the aforementioned book, Millennials belong to the *Hero* category, featuring a deep trust in authority and institutions; being somewhat conventional, but still powerful. They grew up during an *Unraveling* cycle with more protections than the previous generation (Gen X). They are heavily dependent on team-work, and thus, when they come of age, turn into the heroic team-working young people of a Crisis. In their middle years, they become the energetic, decisive, and strong leaders of a *High* cycle; and in old age, they become the criticised powerful elders of an *Awakening* cycle.

Corporate experience in product marketing and branding suggests that building a strong brand image in the marketplace is based on four key principles. When applied in the HR setting, these principles can provide a valuable framework for executives interested in developing a strong client centered HR services.

Focus on Corporate Strategic Goals and Objectives: Ultimately, a firm's marketing strategy and its product brand serve the business and strategic objectives of the corporation. The firm's employment brand should, likewise, be tied to corporate strategy. Gen Y are go-getters, about as many Gen Y who call themselves very ambitious say they are willing to go the extra mile for their company's success. Aligning Gen Y to corporate Goals and Objectives are very critical for Gen Ys retention and leveraging their contribution to the organisation.

Utilize Market Research: A fundamental principle in product marketing is to "know your customer." Market research is critical to segmenting the marketplace and uncovering consumer preferences and buying habits. Building an effective employment brand requires similar research on the Gen Y labour market and the preferences of current and potential employees.

Design Compelling and Differentiated Products: Firms must design and offer products that meet consumer preferences — in other words, products that deliver value to consumers. In a similar vein, the corporation must offer HR value proposition that is appealing to current and

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potential employees in Gen Y category. Moreover, effective product brands stand out — they are differentiated from the brands of other companies. In today's tight labour market, it is imperative that corporations differentiate their HR services from those of their talent competitors.

Build and Enhance the Brand Over Time: A key test for any product brand is the "test of time" — can the brand remain strong and vital in the marketplace? Maintaining a strong brand and the advantages it provides requires dedicated brand management, as well as continuous market research. Effective employment brands will also require control and maintenance over time.

Building a strong employment brand and customer oriented HR services can be accomplished along much the same lines that strong product brands are developed. Starting with corporate strategy and goals and the workforce strategy and goals that they drive, companies need to develop an understanding of the labour market and the segments of the workforce they hope to attract and retain to achieve these goals. Companies then need to develop a compelling employment offer and other HR services that provides competitive advantage in the labour market. With a compelling offer in hand, brand equity is built through effective marketing and brand management — over time.

Generation Y is smart, creative, optimistic, achievement-oriented and tech-savvy. This young generation seeks out creative challenges, personal growth and meaningful careers. They seek supervisors and mentors who are highly engaged in their professional development. Generation Y are excellent multi-taskers and prefer communications through e-mail and text messaging over face-to-face interaction. Their attitude is "don't waste my time making me come to your office." They would rather send an e-mail so they can be drafting a brief, research a case and answering e-mail at the same time. Cybertraining and lectures through web-based delivery systems may be more effective than traditional lectures.

One of the mainstays of market research is conjoint analysis — a survey and analysis tool that is specifically designed to reveal the importance of product attributes (or features) in a consumer's purchase decision and the relative value consumers place on various levels of these attributes. Conjoint's analytic power comes from requiring customers to make multiple choices—or trade-offs—between pairs of hypothetical products, each with its own unique combination of attributes. Understanding which attributes and levels are preferred; companies can alter their existing product or design a new product to meet consumer tastes. In its traditional use in product marketing, conjoint analysis asks consumers to choose between multiple product configurations with different product attributes (such as colour, price and size). Based on consumer's product choices, this analytic process reveals the relative importance of different attributes in consumer purchase decisions. As competition in the labour market has intensified, HR leaders have shown an ever increasing interest in employment branding and strategies to differentiate themselves. Strong demand for specific skills, in addition to ever tighter labour markets generally, is making it much more difficult both to retain current employees and to recruit new employees. The labour market today is much more fluid, with more and better information available to employees than ever before. Employers in this environment are coming to view their employment offer — or employment "value proposition" — like a product in a market — in this case the labour market. Much like a product in traditional markets, the job offer must meet employee (consumer) preferences, be differentiated

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from competing offers and have a strong reputation or brand. One of the best weapons in a competitive labour market is a strong employment brand that attracts and retains key talent. Today labour market consists of heterogeneous and diverse workforce belonging to different generations viz, Traditionalist, Baby boomers, Generation X and Gen Y.

The Millennial Generation (or Gen Y), like other generations, has been shaped by the events, leaders, developments and trends of its time. The rise of instant communication technologies made possible through use of the internet, such as email, texting, and IM and new media used through website like YouTube and social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, may explain the Millennials' reputation for being somewhat peer-oriented due to easier facilitation of communication through technology. Expression and acceptance has been highly important to this generation. In well-developed nations, several cohorts of Generation Y members have found comfort in online games.

Generation Y who grew up in Asian countries show different preferences and expectations of work to those who grew up in the US or Europe. This is usually attributed to the differing cultural and economic conditions experienced while growing up. The Millennials are sometimes called the "Trophy Generation", or "Trophy Kids", a term that reflects the trend in competitive sports, as well as many other aspects of life, where mere participation is frequently enough for a reward. It has been reported that this is an issue in corporate environments. Some employers are concerned that Millennials have too great expectations from the workplace. Studies predict that Generation Y will switch jobs frequently, holding far more than Generation X due to their great expectations. To better understand this mindset, many large firms are currently studying this conflict and are trying to devise new HR programs to help older employees understand Millennials, while at the same time making Millennials more comfortable. When working with or supervising Generation Y, it's wise to impose structure and stability and cultivate a team-oriented environment. Immediate feedback and praise will help motivate and reassure this young generation. Frequent communication and reassurance will help keep members of Generation Y eager and involved.

Once the appropriate employee segments have been identified, corporations face the choice of how to best structure and target their employment offer to these employee groups. Based on the value of various segments to the firm as well as the firm's ability to structure and support multiple employment offers and job experience, a variety of targeting strategies are available. Each strategy seeks to target an important set of employees with an offer that meets their distinct preferences and the capabilities of the firm. Two important dimensions used for building compelling HR products are attribute of "importance" and "utility"

An *importance score* for each attribute: The score shows the relative importance of each attribute in a purchase decision—e.g., how important is price in a TV-buying decision? How much more (or less) important than make?

***Utility scores* for the individual levels of each attribute:** Utility is a standardised measure showing the relative worth or value of each level within an attribute—e.g., how much more (or less) utility is gained from a 35" TV to a 42" TV? With this information companies can:

- Develop or alter products to better meet consumer preferences

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- Prioritise the allocation of development resources to high impact attributes
- Create marketing and brand development strategies to emphasise important product attributes

In many ways, the attraction and retention of employees has strong parallels with designing, marketing and selling a product. Companies face the challenge of crafting an employment offer (the "product") that will appeal to potential and existing employees (the "customers"). Conjoint analysis is useful in the area of employee retention, as it allows employers to understand the relative value of the many components of their employment offer. Understanding which offer components have the greatest value—and the biggest effect on employee decisions—enables prioritisation of retention efforts.

The Table below illustrates Conjoint analysis framework, which can be used to understand expectation of Gen Y while designing HR products and services.

As the economy recovers, however, companies will return to the challenge of winning over enough highly capable professionals to drive renewal and growth. Only then will they realise that the rules of engagement have changed—that the landscape of talent management has been transformed. The combination of

	Generation Y		
Factors	**Importance**	**Utility**	**Current Satisfaction**
Show us how our success is linked to your success.			
Treat us with respect, recognising that we have a lot to contribute.			
Provide us with clear and ongoing feedback.			
Coach us to improve by showing how.			
Reward us for successes.			
Listen to us so that we can learn from each other.			
Help us to make work fun.			
Let us make a difference so we know what we are doing is important.			

Generation Y eagerly advancing up the professional ranks and Baby Boomers often refusing to retire has, over the course of a few short years, dramatically shifted the composition of the workforce; each of these generations is roughly twice the size of Generation X, which lies between them. More important, Boomers and Gen Ys are together redefining what constitutes a great place to work. As we will show, they tend to share many attitudes and behaviors that set them apart from other generations. These shared preferences constitute a new center of gravity for human resources management.

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BLURRING LINES — A VIEW OF MILLENNIALS IN THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

ABHIJIT BHADURI

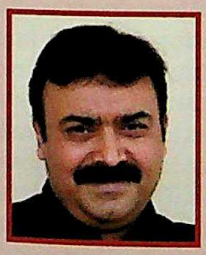
Abstract

Research tells us that a Gen Y person on an average spends 1.6 hours Texting, 1.5 hours Instant Messaging and 1.3 hours on social networking sites, Sounds alarming.

These changing trends and behaviors bring in huge implications to organizations. This article discusses these issues in depth. Lines are rapidly getting blurred between what is seen as public and private information, quick information available via Google or You Tube reduces the need for depth and high dependence on technology reduces human interaction.

Millenials are too large a group to ignore. Therefore, managers and HR departments need to leverage these trends to adapt to this new generation. This article makes practical recommendations such as incorporating more media-rich training content and discusses new concepts such as "reverse mentoring".

About the Author



Abhijit Bhaduri works as the Chief Learning Officer for the Wipro group. Prior to this he led HR teams at Microsoft, PepsiCo, Colgate and Tata Steel and worked in India, SE Asia and US.

Abhijit has written two works of fiction which have been on several bestseller lists. He writes a popular blog at http://abhijitbhaduri.com <http://abhijitbhaduri.com/> where he writes on Management, Music and Books. He can be followed on twitter at http://twitter.com/abhijitbhaduri. He has acted in a movie and in several plays staged in India, Malaysia and US.

Too Large a Group To Ignore

The employees under thirty years of age represent a very large chunk of the demographically young India. This group will be the largest contributor to the global labor force in the coming decades, and will add about 110 million workers by 2020, a study by Goldman Sachs on India's rising labor force has said. Between 2010-2030, India will add 241 Million people in working-age population; Brazil will add around 18 million, while China will add a meager 10 million people during the same time. The tech savvy millennials of India and China seem to be ahead of their Western counterparts based on the variety of ways in which they use technology for their work as well as for their social needs according to new research from Accenture based on more than 5,000 students and young workers in 13 countries around the world.

Not surprising that the technology sector draws the largest number

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of employees from the Millennials today. Organizations in the IT/ITES sector are the largest employers of this generation and that is likely to continue. Presently 65-70% of workforce in most companies in this sector comprises millennials in the age group 20-30 years. They are managed by a generation of older managers who have a completely different world view. Out of the 125,000 employees of Wipro, more than 60% of employees are in their twenties.

What Makes Millennials Different

Technology shapes the way we view the world. These "digital natives" (born after 1980) grew up with the Net. You see them seamlessly multitasking all the time. They have submitted assignments for school and college by surfing the net, they watch movies, play games, and listen to music and text messages in a language that is cryptic. This tech savvy generation picks up how to tips from YouTube. Answers to everything from how to tie a necktie when you go for an interview to tips on "model answers" to tricky interview questions like, "Why are manhole covers round?" can be found on the net (try it!). They have 400 "friends" on Facebook and use the status updates on social network sites to broadcast every small detail of their life continuously. Technology has made sure they get instant responses to everything. They study, work, write, and interact with each other in ways that are very different from the ways that the people who supervise them in the office. They read blogs rather than newspapers. They often meet each other online before they meet in person. They communicate through text messages on Smartphones rather than emails. The changing nature of human relationships is second nature to some, and learned behavior to others.

When the Millennials enter the workplace, they come in with different expectations that their managers find hard to comprehend. They get most of their knowledge from peers and from online sites. They learn more by using video rather than textbooks. Imagine the frustration of a person who discovers that the company policy blocks the use of social networking sites.

The transition to the first job is often a huge transition that they are unable to fathom. The IT policies of most employers are seen to be archaic in the eyes of Millennials. Their definition of information security, privacy, loyalty and work style is different from the views of the older employees who manage them.

Blur 1: Public vs Private

The line between what is private information and what is public is blurred in the minds of the Millennials who routinely share details of their relationships and breakups on Facebook. The photos of the weekend party are posted for all to see. Therefore they are often surprised when they are pulled up by their manager for sharing proprietary information about policies and compensation or even their tiffs with their managers with their social circle. IT policies of many employers in the tech sector are now allowing employees to bring their own device. I have seen many a manager expressing dismay about a millennial sending an informal text message full of cryptic abbreviations to appraise a client about the project just the way they keep friends informed about the change in the movie timings! While social networks have made job searches very easy, it is also easy for employers to check the online presence of a potential employee before offering a job. In the same way, the disgruntled employees can damage the reputation of a giant corporation by posting their experiences on a blog.

Blur 2: Depth vs Breadth

1. The access to technology and the ability to search answers to anything instantaneously for this connected generation has created a generation that values variety and a short interaction

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in everything they do. To have someone then sit through an hour long departmental meeting could be sheer torture. The speed of being able to find answers through technology has perhaps made it easy for Millennials in the Tech sector to adjust to the demands of short term projects. They find it easier to work on projects that give them a short burst of exposure to a new challenge, maybe even a new client's work and in a few months to move to another assignment. This throws up another challenge in the workplace where they have to wait for 18-24 months before they are eligible to apply for a formal job rotation. For the moment they are interested in gathering a kaleidoscope of experiences but that is not giving them enough opportunity to build depth of knowledge and insight that comes from repeating a task in a variety of situations to understand what causes the variation in the outcome.

Blur 3: Human vs Technology

The greatest strength of this demographic chunk lies in their comfort with technology. The interactions with peers have one common characteristic. They are brief, abbreviated and mostly not face to face. The book *Born Digital* says, "They have created a 24/7 network that blends the human with the technical to a degree we haven't experienced before, and it is transforming human relationships in fundamental ways. They feel as comfortable in online spaces as they do in offline ones." This makes them far more suitable for roles that do not need a lot of interaction in the real world. While they find it easy to collaborate using technology, when they are put in tasks that need soft skills like persuading, convincing and negotiating, they need more coaching and training before they learn to read verbal and non-verbal cues. Technology has made them addicted to feedback. Millennials want regular communication, no matter how it's delivered. Robert Half International and Yahoo! HotJobs polled more than 1,000 Millennials and found that over 60 percent wanted to hear from managers at least once a day.

THE MANAGERS' VIEW OF MILLENNIALS

1. **Driven- Millennials are eager to contribute and ready to take on responsibility.** Patience is not a virtue for this generation which has been used to instant gratification all their lives. They want it all and want it now. They want to see the career path laid out in front of them so that they can decide if this fits in with their life goals. This cohort has a very different view of careers and that is made of short interesting assignments where they can learn and make new friends. Both these factors become a big factor for attracting and retaining them to an organization. They are keen to take on additional responsibility once they know where their role fits in to the larger goal of the organization and their own career goals.

   Implication for Organizations: The role of the manager in making meaning of the work through constant mentoring and coaching is a key variable in keeping them engaged. The managers can no longer assign work and give them feedback at the end of the project or during the annual appraisal cycle. They need to be in constant dialog with their team members to be able to get the best from them.

2. **Technology savvy - Multi-tasking is the norm for this `video game generation'.** Accenture's study on the Millennials and technology shows that these trends are here to stay. They spend significantly more time texting (1.6 hours on average), instant messaging (1.5 hours on average), and on social network sites (1.3 hours on average). Not only is this future workforce constantly plugged in, they exhibit similar comfort in sharing

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openly with peers online. One in three young and mid-Millennials will write about themselves and friends online. One in four Millennials globally - and four in five in China and India - use social networking to investigate employers, superiors, clients, and service providers. If senior managers aren't using the same communications vehicles as Millennials, they won't be part of the conversation.

Implication for Organizations: The managers of Millennials have to be far more tech-savvy and have to learn to communicate with them in the language the young employees understand best. Texting is more effective than emails. They can use text messaging to give more frequent feedback to the team members.

3. **Socially responsible - Millennials want to be part of something bigger.** They want their employer to be more than just a workplace. They want an open environment to exchange their ideas. They believe strongly that the government can address the major challenges facing the country and they are willing to make sacrifices in their own life to participate in this. They believe that organizations should look at the triple bottom line. The overwhelming connect of the youth with the ideas of Anna Hazare is proof that the youth is keen on a society where corruption is not the driving theme.

   Implication for Organizations: The organizations can leverage their Corporate Social Initiatives in a far stronger way to build their employer brand and craft an employee value proposition that lets them go beyond their organizational roles and lets them give back to society. This can be a very powerful tool to attract and retain talent. Those who are about to enter the workforce and those who have been employed for five years or less-hold a deep conviction that they want more from their vocations than just a paycheck.

4. **Relationship oriented - brought up highly involved parents, this generation believes family is the most important and it also values virtual relationships.** For them friendship is a strong motivator when choosing a company. They look to opportunities and flexibility in work norms to help them establish and retain these relationships. They desire regular feedback and recognition of efforts put in by them. The peer group is a very significant influence in the decisions they take. They look at life like a video game. They always want to know how to get to the next level, and they instantaneously want to be told if they are winning or losing.

   Implication for Organizations: Maybe because they have grown up in an environment populated by tweets, instant blog comments, and texts, today's young workers need immediate feedback. Many organizations are creating their own internal social network sites that allow them to connect with others in an informal basis on a platform that is not policed so that they can share their status updates on a constant basis as they go through the ups and downs of their work day. Thanks to technology, they are natural networkers. Even while they are working for one company, they are constantly connecting with their friends and gathering data about what else is out there. They are constantly comparing their jobs to their friends' jobs. If they see something better they are going to jump on that.

Ways to Leverage the Millennials

Keeping the driving values of the Millennials in mind, Human Resources team can change the game for these Millennials and leverage on their strengths,

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providing an atmosphere where they would thrive thereby retaining them in the Organization

1. **Recruitment:** Understanding how millennials gather and digest information will help the employers in attracting them. On the company Web site, blogs and social networking sites articulate the opportunities for advancement and the likelihood of doing interesting and challenging work.

- Highlight travel opportunities and a fun social environment through videos of current employee testimonials. Post them on the company's Web site.
- Give the prospective employees e-mail addresses of current employees willing to talk personally about positive experiences of their job assignments and co-workers who are interesting and fun to be with.
- Give serious thought to your social media strategy. This is a very important forum to engage potential employees through two way conversations. Stop selling the company constantly. It makes them suspicious. They would rather hear the testimonials from "people like them".

2. **Engagement:** Show them how they can advance in the organization by giving them a realistic preview of career movement.

- They could be paired up with relatively new, successful employees so they can talk to them about the ropes and what it takes to be successful at the firm. They need to be shown the company rewards performance instead of just seniority.
- Offer formal rotation programs. Feature special project assignments. Provide a diverse set of job responsibilities.
- Establish formal extracurricular learning time. Allow them to shadow executives. Cultivate an informal work environment.
- All Millennials have one thing in common: They are new to the professional workplace. Therefore, they are definitely in need of mentoring, no matter how smart and confident they are. And they'll respond well to the personal attention. Because they appreciate structure and stability, mentoring Millennials should be more formal.
- Use reverse mentoring (match a millennial to a senior executive) and that helps the senior leaders as much as it helps the young employee.

3. **Learning & Development:** The millennial learner's requirements and expectations of the learning environment are different from their predecessors.

- Redesign training & development programs to embrace the differences of the Millennial generation. Utilize the latest technology to deliver audio-visually rich, multi-tasking challenges which require a collaborative approach and offer instant feedback.
- Millennials learn better from video. Use these to create content they can leverage on their own. Ask them to capture their ideas and learning on video for others to see.

The Millennials are too large a group to ignore. They are also very different from anyone in the organization who is more than thirty years old. So no matter how well you communicate in English, if the majority of the employees who are in the organization as well as those who will be entering the workforce are speaking a foreign language then the managers have to learn this new language that everyone is speaking.

"In times of change, learners inherit the Earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists." - Hoffer

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THE CHANGING FACE OF THE GENERATIONS AT WORK

PRITHVI SHERGILL

Abstract

Seems incredible that 3 generations of employees are rubbing shoulders and working together in organizations today. Baby Boomers (1946-64), Gen X (1965-1978) Gen Y (1979-1994).

This interesting article talks about common themes between Gen Y and Boomers — these oversize bookend generations have an extraordinary amount in common. A sense of purpose, shared vision and values, need for flexibility and mentoring. This article is replete with insights such as "Gen Y seek out Boomers for mentoring and professional advise and Boomers take delight in taking the Yérs under their wings called "Generation Jumping" and a new set of Gen Yers who are financially dependent on their parents — KIPPERS — "Kids in Parent's Pockets Eroding Retirement Savings!".

The article espouses that instead of treating the workforce as a single monolithic entity, it is becoming imperative to respond to the different aspirations and needs of the different generations of workforce with a degree of customization and granularity.

About the Author

Prithvi Shergill is a Senior Executive in Accenture's Human Resources team. He has more than 20 years of experience in HR. Prior to Accenture, he has worked with AT & T, Vsource and Singapore Telecom.

Right now, when you speak with managers of people, you find an increasing nervousness about whether we are heading into the latter part of a W-shaped downturn. They're wrestling with optimising head count, weighing alternatives related to contingent staffing and alternate talent pools, and generally trying to do more with less.

Even in this mindset, the focus on "the war for talent" remains. Companies recognise that a key enabler of growth is attracting the right people, at the right time, at the right cost, with the right skills, in the right place to drive renewal.

The right talent pool to look at is a combination of Generation Y eagerly advancing up the professional ranks and Baby Boomers still in the workforce. Over the course of the last few years, they have dramatically shifted the composition of the workforce; as each of these generations is

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roughly twice the size of Generation X, which lies between them. More important, Boomers and Gen Ys are together redefining what constitutes a great place to work. As we experience, they tend to share many attitudes and behaviours that set them apart from other generations.

These shared preferences constitute a new center of gravity for human resources management and needs us to ask - what will it take to be an employer of choice?

Research by Accenture finds that people in the workplace today are looking for a rethink of the value proposition offered - the questions they are asking are as shown below.

This is both challenging and liberating for talent managers. It's challenging because it means rethinking how we approach design of our practices, policies, processes and programs.

Like Boomer, Like Y

It isn't that the same employees who in the past wanted one thing have now changed their spots and want something different. The shift we are seeing in workplace preferences has everything to do with a new mix of people. Specifically, Generation Y (born 1979 through 1994) is roughly double the size of Gen X (1965 through 1978). Under any circumstances, that large a cohort would be a force to be reckoned with. In this case, its influence is compounded by the fact that the huge Baby Boom generation (1946 through 1964), unlike any previous cohort in age, remains very present in the workplace - and these two oversize "bookend" generations have an extraordinary amount in common.

Purpose. Both Boomers and Gen Ys, we found, are drawn to opportunities that allow time out to explore passions, hobbies, and good works. For example, research shows that nearly half of Ys say it's important that the company they work for offer sabbatical leaves - that such perks boost commitment and performance. It's a preference that also resonates with Boomers, close to a third of whom report having taken time out when surveyed. Both groups see such breaks as opportunities for personal fulfillment: Both Gen Ys and Boomers who temporarily step away from work, use the time to explore passions or volunteer.

Shared vision and values. Gen Ys and Boomers also share a heightened sense of obligation to make a positive contribution to society and to the health of the planet. Large numbers of them say it's important that their work involve "giving back." That's not as true for Gen X: People in their thirties and early forties are less likely than twenty somethings to find this important.

Achieving balance with flex and remote working. Overwhelming majorities of Gen Ys and Boomers say that having flexible work options is important. Similar numbers also say that work-life balance matters to them, so it's not surprising that roughly two-thirds of both groups also wish for opportunities to work remotely. Having the freedom to choose when and where to work is very powerful, particularly for young employees: Ys say this freedom motivates them to give 110% effort. (That's also true for Gen Xers, although to a lesser degree.) But the desire to work remotely is tempered by Ys' and Boomers' love of teamwork and community. While some would even give up a personal workspace to be able to work

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remotely, most who want a remote option would prefer working from home just one day a week.

Mentoring and generation-jumping. Gen Ys are usually the offspring of Boomers - and a famously doted-upon set of children. Perhaps that's why these two generations seek each other out in the workplace. Boomers delight in taking Ys under their wing: as they perceive members of the younger cohort look to them for advice and guidance. Generation Y's motto, meanwhile, seems to be "Trust those over 50." Most Ys say they look to Boomers, rather than Xers, for professional advice, and over three quarters say they enjoy working with Boomers. The fact that Ys go to Boomers for mentoring is also remarkable, given the layers that typically separate them in a corporate hierarchy.

"Kippers" and Velcro relationships. The parent-child bond that creates such close connections between Gen Ys and Boomers also involves demands on time and resources. A large proportion of Ys report that they talk to their parents every day. The fact that many of their generation are still financially dependent on their parents has given rise to a new acronym: Kippers (for Kids in Parents' Pockets Eroding Retirement Savings).

Rewards remix. Finally, Gen Ys and Boomers share a sense intellectually that financial gain is not the right reason to join or stick with an employer. Both generations rate other forms of pay as at least as important as money: a great team, challenging assignments, a range of new experiences, and explicit performance evaluation and recognition.(Women, in particular, of both generations place high importance on receiving recognition for a job well done.)

We must note that we don't know why these markers of a shifting value proposition show up in the bookend generations more than in Gen X. If a 38-year-old man is less likely to crave for purpose or opt for a rewards remix, is that because he is more likely to have a hefty mortgage and school-age children? In other words, is it a matter of life circumstances rather than underlying values?

How the trend will unfold is unclear, but the fact that differences exist today is incontrovertible.

The Workforce of One

The way companies manage their people to date has been largely a one-size-fits-all affair. To ensure efficiency, equality, and fairness, they train everyone on the same knowledge and in the same way, they rank people on the same performance criteria, and they provide the same set of rewards, assuming everyone is motivated by the same thing.

Most organisations-with their formalised processes and lists of standard competencies, training, and linear lockstep career paths-operate under the assumption that most employees are the same, or that they should be reshaped until they are.

But think about it: because everyone has different abilities, work styles and preferences, and motivations to work, no single way of treating an individual is ever likely to be the best way.

So instead of treating a workforce as a single, monolithic entity....let's first lay a bit of context to help you understand how the workforce of one concept was born, and why we think it is so powerful. Just think for a minute about what's happened in business in the past few years.

A few years ago (2006), for example, Time Magazine named its person of the year to be YOU. It proclaimed that You, Me, and every other individual controls the information age. "Me" is a powerful word in today's economy.

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Individuals have more power than ever before, and expect - even demand - that products and services meet our own individual needs, and that we can participate, even lead, in creating them. The center of the business world has shifted; no longer is it "e-business," but rather it's "me-business."

The notion of the customisation - of flexing to be able to meet the varying needs of me - has nothing short of revolutionised whole fields of human endeavour. We take it for granted today that you can customise everything from your own postage stamp to medicines to your iTunes playlist to your Nike shoes. Companies can now target very specific marketing and sales messages based on your unique attributes, as Amazon does with suggesting products based on previous buying history. Loyalty programs from hotels customise and treat customers based on buying behaviours of the individual. Ordinary folks like you and me even contribute substantially to the value of the product or service we buy today by interacting with each other - think of how we can contribute our own content to Wikipedia or YouTube. Web 2.0, or the ability for ordinary people to contribute content and create value, has recently swept the business world - being heralded as a fundamental step change in business.

This is all about the age of granularity. As an Economist article pointed out, we are in an age where granularity is king - where quantum mechanics breaks matter down to the subatomic level, and where each parcel in the supply chain can be marked with a radio-frequency ID tag and tracked and managed individually. Even fields like medicine and education are breaking new ground by focusing on the individual. Scientists are now talking about an era of personalised medicine - matching drugs to people's individual DNA, and tailoring leadership development programs to people's individual leadership styles as determined through brain scans. And leading innovation expert Clayton Christensen even writes about how tailoring learning to the individual through technology will soon revolutionise our entire educational system as well.

Today, me, you, and everyone wants to have a real voice.

We expect to be treated by organisations as individuals, and we expect to be able to participate and even take the lead in creating value with the companies with which we chose to do business.

This has especially influenced The "Net Generation," or Generation Y. They are in a me-oriented mindset — expecting customisation in everything including their workplace. Having grown up in a customised world, it's all they know.

We need to respond to view each of them as a "workforce of one" with distinct and unique needs and preferences that vary over time" — and most importantly, in a manageable, scalable, and fair way.

Today more than ever, such a tailored, personalised approach to managing human resources is critical.

The fact of the matter is that the collective face of the workforce has changed significantly, but organisations have not changed with it. In an age of globalisation, virtual work, freelancers, an unprecedented four generations in the workforce at once, and more women in the workforce than ever before, no longer can we count on the fact that an organisation's employees will look like one another.

Even when people don't vary on such dimensions, they are still likely to have vastly different aspirations and needs at work because they have differing personalities and interests — we can't just rely on the standard diversity dimensions we have relied on in the past.

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To really maximise performance, organisations need to begin taking a much more sophisticated look at diversity by capitalising on difference across a whole new host of dimensions: values, motivations, strengths, learning styles, wellness profiles, mobility, life stage, and more.

The New Workplace Imperatives

Few companies in today's knowledge intensive economy would deny that they compete on the caliber of their people. With this richer understanding of the two generations that now dominate the workforce, the challenge becomes clear. Companies whose employment offers align best with the shared values of Boomers and Gen Ys will enjoy a major talent advantage. If we were designing a workplace from scratch today, or consulting to a big employer, we would recommend incorporation of five elements.

1. Modularity. By this, we mean the kind of "chunking" of work that allows Boomers to scale back their hours and breadth of control, but still tackle the sophisticated tasks that their years of experience equip them to handle. It's what we've seen at American Express, whose "phased retirement" approach keeps workers in their sixties contributing meaningfully on an individual-project basis; and at Novartis, where a program called PrimeForce invites retired managers to return for short-term assignments. In some organisations, like Harvard University, it means specific training for the "second act" that retirees tend to choose: social entrepreneurship and leadership of nonprofit organisations. Many Gen Y employees prefer to work on a project basis and similar choices need to be enabled for them.

2. Flexibility. This can - and should - come in many forms. Financial services companies, for all their recent troubles, have been hotbeds of innovation in this regard. Accenture's efforts to offer Flexible Work Arrangements has evolved to further study the nature of work to identify specific roles and positions which can be offered flexibly. Citigroup's Alternative Work Solutions program has successfully maintained productivity while allowing people to work where and how they want. At the heart of such programs is the kind of trust and clear goal-setting that electronics retailer Best Buy built into its Results-Only Work Environment, an initiative for headquarters staff launched in 2006. As the name suggests, people are held accountable for results, not the particular hours they keep at the office.

3. Opportunities to give back. The Accenture Development Program is a great example, which allows employees to use their consulting skills to help entrepreneurs in parts of the world where management capabilities are scarce — by helping these developmental or not-for-profit organisations typically by providing services that they couldn't otherwise afford. This Program helps jump-start growth for them and us in new areas by cultivating the talents of high-potential employees and increasing their attachment to the firm. Many companies support their people's favourite causes, whether with release time for volunteering or with matching funds for contributions. But it's hard to top the sense of satisfaction you get from using your vocational strengths to make a difference to a worthy cause.

4. Progressive policies. As people become more concerned about global climate change, many companies have discovered that a progressive work environment is deeply appreciated. Genzyme's eco-friendly building bespeaks a commitment to the planet's health that its people can point to with pride. Accenture's office environment is progressive in other ways, having been designed to foster

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collaboration and innovation. They are designed in many countries to offer spaces that keep people visible to each other and easier to circulate so that they can have the informal chance encounters that often spark ideas. Many companies add to that a profusion of art and you have a refreshing change from the acres of cubicles that dominate much corporate real estate.

5. Intergenerational mentoring. The best examples we've seen are at Time Warner and Cisco. At Cisco, the effort is an outgrowth of the company's long-standing facilitation of internal employee networking. One active network known as the Legacy Leaders Network, for Boomer-aged executives, has partnered with another called the New Hire Network. Both groups are learning from the cross-pollination. Gen Ys are encouraging Boomers to join the right sites on the internet and teaching them how to utilise it effectively in various organisations. Boomers are welcoming the chance to share know-how and business contacts with much younger colleagues. Informal mentoring is running both ways

Open Season

More important than any program or set of imperatives is the insight that every new generation of workers brings with it particular values that reflect not its members' youth but, rather, their fundamental makeup. Sometimes, lacking sufficient heft and arriving in subordinate roles, they - and their preferences - hold little sway. In other eras, like this one, they get what they want. That's why large organisations will find themselves in a curious position over the next several years. As Baby Boomers slowly step out of full-time posts, Gen X will take on the highest executive roles - and will have not only a very dissimilar cohort to oversee in its juniors, but also the unprecedented challenge of caring for its lingering elders. Thus, the generation in charge will need to manage a workforce it is fundamentally out of step with. Just as marketers in training are constantly reminded "You are not the customer," these executives will have to come to terms with the fact that they are not the talent. Managers with open minds and newly energised growth plans will find ways to satisfy the workplace demands of the talent they seek. And they will continue to monitor the changing attitudes of workers. The transformation of the workforce they are now experiencing is a particularly dramatic one, but hardly the last. The organisations that thrive will be those that recognise their people's shifting values and preferences - and that find ways to make the work meaningful on those terms.

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GETTING HR READY FOR GEN Y : WHAT SHOULD COMPANIES DO DIFFERENTLY

S V NATHAN

Abstract

As a Baby Boomer, I have been consigned to being stuck to a certain basis and a certain bias of the way work is done and communicated. In fact, I am always a bit uncertain if I should be saying something or not. The Gen Y is far more liberal in their views and more importantly, it is important to express them and freely so, says the author of this article in a confessional and candid manner-outlining major changes in attitudes that characterize the Gen Y. This article discusses many changes we have to bring in our mindsets to deal with Gen Y. Further the article presents how career understanding is changing (Careers that zig and zag — not straight up or Work is what you do — not where you go) and how Deloitte as a company has adopted Mass Career Customization (MCC) to handle the new expectations of Gen Y.

About the Author

S.V. Nathan is the Talent Director for the Deloitte U.S. India offices, with over 26 years of professional experience in human resource management. Nathan has led many teams of young professionals in both multinationals as well as Indian entrepreneurial organisations, while helping build small- and large-format organisations.

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INTRODUCTION

'The future is not what it used to be' - Yogi Berra.

Today's work place is dynamic and complex. And we now have a lot of people from different generations at work. It was not uncommon to see in old Indian companies grandfathers working with grandchildren of their friends. Yet there is something different about it today. Something that has occurred in the generational development that has caused a shift in the way we think about work, the social structure and the organisational ethos. Social scientists put this down to the age of the Internet generation, the children of the new economy, and label them as Generation Y. It is just that organisations are changing and becoming complex, with

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employees who are at different 'stages' of their lives. These employees carry with them their past experiences, which are largely influenced by external events. These changes in an environment is the reason why we have tried to classify employees by the year they were born: Veterans (1922 - 1945), Baby boomers (1946 - 1964), Gen X (1965-1980) and now, the GEN Y (1981-1995).

The Generation Y, also known as Millenials, is tech-savvy and motivated. They bring diversity in culture, habits and behaviours to the workplace, exhibited in the way they act, work, communicate, exchange and relate to their environment and people. According to statistics, Gen Y people who are 15-25 years old constitute 25% of the world's population. In addition, in China and India, 200 million and 500 million people, respectively, are below 25 years of age. It is said that India is the largest country with the youngest workforce, a tag that will live on till 2039.

Given this huge influx of young workforce, the one that is likely to determine the future of most organisations, it is important to understand organisation's readiness, especially as it pertains to Attracting, Recruiting and Retaining Gen Y. Given that there is not as much research in India about this generation, the author has relied on international studies to provide a context.

THE DISTINCTIVE WORKPLACE OF TODAY AND HR'S ROLE

It is important to realise that workplaces are evolving too. Judith Heerwagen, who has done a lot of research in this says that work is more complex today, more team based, dependent on social skills and more dependent on technological competence than yester years. It is more time pressured and more mobile and less dependent on geography. Organisations have responded to this change and many strive to be more leaner and more agile, focused on identifying value from the customer perspective, more tuned to competitive requirements and strategy, less hierarchical in structure and decision making, less likely to provide lifelong careers and job security and continually reorganising to maintain or gain competitive advantage. In this context, the organisational challenges of the future will not be about fighting the war for talent or managing performance or developing people, but managing the expectations of Gen Y. The role of HR would be crucial in creating the ideal workplace culture and managing all the critical aspects of an organisation's relationship with the workforce. (Ref: Under the Bonnet Journal by Totus Consulting — http://www.totusconsulting.com/pdf/utb_jun08.pdf). According to the authors, the HR profession will evolve into distinct disciplines of 1.The Employee Relations professional, and 2. The Organization Development professional.

The emergence of Gen Y population will increasingly lead to the emergence of classical employee relation issues such as grievance redressal, employee rights, employees' psychological well-being and so on. The employee relations professional will have to roll up his/her sleeves and build trust to efficiently manage these issues before attempting to engage minds and expectations. The organisation development professionals will need to ensure organisational effectiveness by designing and implementing interventions that addresses these challenges. The need of organisation development support would be so high that there is a good chance of this role being played by the CEO, should the HR partner not be able to

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do so. Future HR leaders would either be specialists in the above disciplines who would have worked their way up, or would be business leaders who would step in to fill the void.

HOW IS GEN Y DIFFERENT?

Organisations have had people from different age groups working for them. But never in history, have there been exhaustive discussions on these age groups. So, why is there a sudden interest in Gen Y alone? What is so special about them? Gen Y is a unique generation in our history. Some of the reasons* why they are considered distinct from the others are:

1. Gen Y members have come of age in a very child-focused world. Many of them had Baby boomers as parents; boomers are as competitive for their children as they were for themselves. Boomers have worked long hours and are used to getting their own way, and they have been strong advocates for their children. Thus, Gen Y has grown up in a very structured, busy and over planned world. This has positively impacted their competitive spirit and result orientation.

2. Boomers have made sure their children participate in all forms of lessons and activities, when they grew up. This participation in all activities has made them confident and optimistic, and has developed their urge to feel valued and wanted.

3. This generation combines the can-do attitude of Veterans, the teamwork ethic of Boomers and the technological savviness of Generation X. For this group, the preferred learning conditions should combine teamwork and technology.

Some interesting findings about Gen Y :

1. 56% prefer to work flexibly and choose when to work and 79% prefer to be mobile rather than static workers. Young women (18-25 years old) prefer more flexibility than men.

2. 41% of the Generation Y prefers to have access to a team space and 32% prefers breakout spaces rather than a conventional meeting room. The Generation Y is team focused and places importance on work with and among a team. The reasons for choosing a company are: Opportunities for Learning, Quality of Life, and Work

3. 96% want an environmentally aware workplace. Gen Y demonstrates a green sensibility be it office location, means of transport, or ways of working.

Many Gen Y people are entering the job market, which is to fill in the gap left by many retiring Baby boomers. However it is not the same. This change is in an era of a different social and business transformation and economic environment. This era is one that has choices defined in it. Choices for employees. As much as it is about organisations wanting to recruit the people they want, it also that the new generation is looking to see what they want in organisation's - a clear shift.

A SMART SHIFT IN GEARS

Today's young professionals come to a workplace with different expectations than the previous generations. Organisations need to understand these expectations to be able to attract and retain talent. It is generally believed that there are a number of things that the Gen Y want. It ranges

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from flexibility, mentorship, challenge, state of the art technology, trust, challenge, a certain work life balance, feedback, recognition and pride. Nothing that the older generation did not want either, but there is a distinction. The world of the Gen Y is one of choice and flexibility. Let us consider a few important things that are important to this generation:

1. CONTENT to CONTEXT :

Content is now available in plenty and the only way that Gen Y will relate is if the context is understood, the big picture and in a way that relates to their specific roles. This way a connection is built with them. The gift of context is the most important gift. Managers often make a mistake of allowing Gen Y to remain in a vacuum. Every situation has a context and building a context and communicating it is the key to engagement.

2. CONTROL to COLLABORATION:

For long the control aspect of our job has been seen as a fulcrum of working things out. Today is the world of collaboration. The world of Wiki and the world of open source code are examples in this era of change. An ability of an organisation to allow for and foster the collaborative working and building an infrastructure will determine its success in its war for attracting and retaining talent. Many new age companies born post 1990 have brought in technology led collaboration platforms with great success.

3. AUTHORITY to AUTHENTICITY:

In the best of times and in the worst of times, we have resisted authority. We had respected them, but the new age employees are looking beyond authority. They would like to look at individuals who wield that authority and in some way even 'determine' if they are worthy of that ! Authority is now replaced increasingly by a certain authenticity that brings in a more personal touch to the whole deal about work and the relations of a young professional to that leader's position. The whole notion of 'don't give me those ones' and the general party line toeing is the whole reason, that in this age, the generation is swayed by the simplicity of an authentic message. And we have seen some recent reactions to the crusade against corruption, as an example. Organisations who have a strong authentic way of dealing with its employees will trump those who don't.

4. EXPERIENCE to EXPECTATION:

The notion of experience and what it means is well understood, but it is also seen as somewhat over rated, if this does not tie in with what that experience brings to the workplace. Increasingly, the shift to 'what is expected' and what it will mean to meet that expectation is more relevant to the Gen Y. In some way, this ties in with the whole notion of context setting. A strong culture of setting expectation and working backwards from that base, gives the Gen Ys a strong compass to chart course with.

5. ENTRENCHMENT to EXPRESSION :

As a Baby Boomer, I have been consigned to being stuck to a certain basis and a certain bias of the way work is done and communicated. In fact, I am always a bit uncertain if I should be saying something or not. The Gen Y is far more liberal in their views and more importantly, it is important to express them and freely so. The Facebook generation is changing the way we work the social media. Encouraging Gen Y to be more expressive and creating and channeling a forum for such expression of ideas and thoughts will go a

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long way in engaging them in a meaningful manner. And teaching them the boundary management and the value of such, is again a matter of setting a context.

6. MONITORING to MENTORING:

The whole notion of work and the way this is delivered has changed over a long period of time. The Taylor method has almost been replaced. Organisations over time have tried to make work meaningful and the notion of constant monitoring is getting replaced by a strong training and capability building and thereafter post certifications, allowing for young people to determine their performance for themselves. Self-evaluation is the new normal. In such an environment, the younger employees look for mentoring. They search for role models and someone that they can emulate. They can look up to. Again, it is not one of the long-winded mentoring programs, but short 'speed mentoring' that allows flexibility and choice as central to their learning.

7. CRITIQUING to COACHING:

The notion of teaching and critiquing performance in the age of technology is a lot complex. Feedback is almost instant. However, the softer aspect of feedback and performance enhancement for Gen Y has loads of opportunities in the 'coaching' aspect of capability building. The notion of a personal coach is a well-accepted part of our growing up. It is a lot more accentuated in engaging the Gen Y.

8. RECOGNITION to RESPECT:

The notion of respect was always the preserve of the Gen X when they were in the twilight of their careers. The Gen Y want it today, and they like to be valued for what they contribute. While recognition is important and personalised, even better is the thought of being respected by authority and an important part of engagement. And organisations that engage in 'Gold Spotting', the top performers and managing to work at this element will find huge value in their sustained contributions and of course, retention.

9. RETENTION to' RETRAIN-TION':

Most of us are caught up in the notion of retention as the key to our firm's success. Gen Y believes in learning and VC++ must now become CV++. What we can do to continuously engage the Gen Y in learning new things and applying them will make the notion of retention a non-issue. The act of engagement will be all encompassing here. New courses, newer opportunities, makes it meaningful for young talent.

10. WORK to WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Gen X have been always led by the values of hard and long work. In a distributed time and geographic world, flexibility and choice has become central to the way Gen Y take to originations. So, work from different places, and different times, have become more important. With the huge change in the gender demographics, the workforce is now engendering a new order of the way work is now delivered. Some organisations like Deloitte have brought in a concept of Mass Career Customisation to address the need to balance out career and life situations that makes it easier for a meaningful dialogue on attracting and retaining talent.

A NEW THOUGHT FOR GEN Y : FLEXIBILITY AND CHOICE IN CAREERS.

"Careers that zig and zag - not straight up"

"Work is what you do - not where you go"

"Participation is all in - 5-2025 Gridtown"

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Today there are many permutations of what success looks like. Careers today no longer look at a ladder approach, but more of a lattice approach. Gen Y's approach to work / life compliments the corporate lattice approach. The diverging trends between Corporate Ladder and Corporate Lattice are:

Corporate Ladder	Corporate Lattice
• Hierarchical, top down	• Flatter, networked
• Industrial economy	• Information economy
• Homogeneous workers	• Heterogeneous workers

In response to the changing needs of Gen Y, Deloitte has adopted Mass Career Customisation (MCC). The corner stone of MCC is based on 4 key dimensions, which are Pace, Workload, Location/ Schedule/ Travel and the Role.

Pace: Choices about the planned rate of career growth and/or progression

Workload: Choices about the quantity of work output

Location/Schedule: Choices about when and where work is done

Role: Level within the organisation.

The various stages of one's life cycle dictate and demand flexibility to accommodate changing life needs and patterns.

Based on various life circumstance and requirements, the professionals can choose to either accelerate: 'Dial up' or decelerate: 'dial down' based on the above four dimensions. As an example, if an individual feels that he needs to look after an ailing parent, then such flexibility gives a choice that was otherwise not known. In this case it would be a 'dial down'. And it starts a meaningful conversation. So, a person can dial down for say 60% and would be paid proportionately. And the goals would be adjusted accordingly. After an agreed period, that person can come up to a normal profile and be at 100% workload. The adjusted goals would be evaluated as if 'this were the normal goals'. The best part about a dial down is that there is no stigma attached to a choice of the pace of growth.

Professionals receive the recognition, growth along with flexibility to define and model their careers based on their needs and life circumstances. This allows choices that makes benefits and trade-offs more explicit. For instance, a professional can decide to 'dial up' and take on much more that what she is doing. This allows for a more pronounced work-load, and leads to an accelerated growth. MCC thus provides greater transparency in communicating, and sets the expectation that is so needed for a successful career, providing a more fluid structure in response to personal needs.

Our journey of a tentative start, and has now grown to be a fully grown program, and is getting into a maturity phase. What this program does is that apart from a flexibility of work from home that is sometimes exercised in companies, it also allows flexibility beyond just 'where the work is done'! It helps address the choice factor and define career progression in a more realistic way adjusting to the realities of life space of our Gen Yers.

CONCLUSION:

Gen Y are our future leaders of today. Investing in them is imperative. If they get what they want / need from you, they are

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less likely to leave you. Transparency and openness are the pillars to their engagement today. Get them on board with a right message, and up to speed quickly. A gift of context and their role helps anchoring. Get them to manage themselves, seek their mentors and coaches. The role of HR is to help lead this change from the front. If flexibility and choice are meaningful in this new reality, let us find a way of stitching this into the way we work and do this in a meaningful way sans our own world view, read value clouded lens. Attracting and retaining is a resultant of all such efforts. As they say, the taste of the pudding is in the eating.....in the new Age!

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GETTING HR READY FOR GEN Y: WHAT SHOULD IT COMPANIES DO DIFFERENTLY?

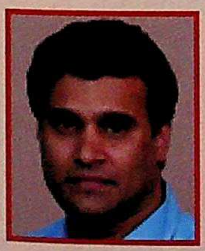
HARI T

Abstract

Interestingly the key challenge for the young generation of today is to "ask the right question" as the answers are relatively easy to find! This is Gen C — which is essentially a digitally connected and savvy generation.

This article speaks about the rapid changes in the way initiatives are being rolled out for the connected generation, Gen C at Mahindra Satyam. Traditional Quarterly or Annual Employee Engagement surveys are being replaced with an online voting button. A question like " Should the dress code in summer be different" gets a real time immediate feedback on which company actions are based. Launching a tool called "Free voice" to increase the level of transparency and openness which enables employees to voice his or her view about issues of a collective nature are some of the initiatives discussed in this article.

About the Author



Hari Thalapalli serves as the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) and Chief People Officer (CPO) of Mahindra Satyam. He has over two decades of experience in the IT industry and has been with Mahindra Satyam for the past 11 years — playing vital roles in the organization's growth and during its turbulent phase in the recent past.

What is Gen C?

Gen C is essentially a digitally connected and savvy generation. This generation is not defined by a chronological age, but by their need and ability to connect to the larger universe around them. This generation always existed - but the advent of technology, social media and gadgets has made it all pervasive.

They are the quintessential geeks who've embraced the digital medium effortlessly and effectively to emerge as a socially and technologically savvy race of humankind. Their need and access to information or knowledge is unparalleled and their triggers are different as are their responses.

For this generation, the key challenge is being able to 'ask the right questions', as 'answers' are easy to find. And they know

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quite well that solutions that work today may not hold good tomorrow.

Not surprisingly therefore, good old motivation methods might fail here, while unique and innovative initiatives will spark attention, thought and action. Culture-proponents have to therefore take cognisance of this and seek a paradigm shift in their own mindset and plans.

This reality manifests itself today in the form of corporate 'Facebook', 'Yammer' and 'Twitter' pages that provide for a live and instant input on various issues. This level of transparency and openness lends itself to instant feedback and positive action. A practical example in our context was the establishment of 'Freevoice' - a tool, which enables any employee to voice his / her view about issues that are of a collective nature. The trend and volume of this cyber chatter provides a live dipstick of the pulse. Corrective action therefore becomes immediate and visible.

HR leaders have a tough job of enabling this vibrant culture and being receptive to direct feedback. The inevitable push back and need to 'keep the noise down' from some quarters should not deter this group, which is mandated with the responsibility of defining this unifying fabric called 'culture'.

Constantly evolving needs

This is a generation whose needs and deeds are morphing at the same pace as the technological changes around them. They are driven by a sense of urgency and seek instant gratification. They expect to be responded to instantly.

Need for personalised attention is high and they will not rest till they get it. A sense of righteousness prevails in word and spirit within a majority of this generation.

Fuelled by a greater awareness of the world around them, the clamour for a level playing field is becoming loud and obvious.

At MSat, the belief has been that the needs of Gen C are best understood by those who truly practice it. In line with that, a decision was made that - given the dispersed nature of our operations - we should have location councils comprising of the 'connected' generation - those who have the ability to stay networked and sense the pulse of the organisation. They were given the authority and responsibility to prioritise the initiatives for that location and roll it out completely. These self nominated youngsters had the mandate to run CSR / Fun and Connect / Branding and employee engagement activities, unrestrained by a centralised organisation or the barriers of functional limitations. Formation of a Shadow Board - akin to a 'Board' minus the regulatory powers - comprising of mid level leaders; mandated to find unconventional solutions to conventional organisational and operational issues is another example of how Gen C has been co-opted to provide the desired acceleration for change initiatives

Ability to adapt to technology

Gen C is obviously high on connectedness and thus on technology. They are instinctively tech savvy and take to newer technologies and gizmos very easily. Their social networks attune them to the emerging trends across the industry and track technology not because they have to, but because they want to.

Their need to 'know' goes far beyond academic interest and their inclination to participate in social experiments is equally high.

If the generation appears to be thirsty and eager to learn, it's also because their capacity to absorb and learn is that much higher. This is a generation that's quick on the uptake and swift in its application - hungry for information, eager for

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application. This is the knowledge generation.

Gone are the days when Quarterly, Half yearly or Annual surveys gave the organisation a peek into employee sentiments. Today is the era of instant feedback. Online surveys with a voting button provide daily inputs into various themes: Should we have a Family Day this month - gets an immediate response to act upon. Should the dress code in summer be different from other times gets a real time and immediate feedback to act on. MSat has used these systems to gauge the mood on a continual basis and alter its programs and policies - and reference these as the harbingers of internal change effectively. Efforts are under way to mobile-enable this, so that employees can provide this feedback from any mobile operating system - iOS / Android or others !

Facilitating learning in a fast changing environment is another area. The dispersed nature and daily travel schedules necessitate the need for alternate modes of learning and certification. Whether it is a certification relating to Mahindra Way or the Code of Ethical Business Conduct or a pure play technology capability - providing online learning and testing with instant feedback and areas of improvement has become the ONLY way forward.

Willingness to be visible, explicit & open

Along with their desire to learn, comes the willingness to be explicit and visible. Today's Gen C has an opinion and is not afraid to voice it. They are unabashed about political views on social platforms like Twitter and are equally unafraid to ask direct and uncomfortable questions on an internal discussion forum.

They are usually generous when it comes to knowledge sharing and are not insecure about sharing it. They are open, vibrant and a demanding generation.

Need for constant change

This is also a restless breed that demands and thrives on change. Early signs of fatigue is a given and they need to be entertained, engaged and kept excited. They are an impatient generation that needs constant feed.

Traditional timeframes for job rotation have been turned upside down. 18 to 24 months in a given job or role brings forth vociferous expressions for change. When I started my career two decades back, ten years was considered a long time and I remember my parents laughing at the gifts and systems we had introduced to honour this longevity dimension. It is not unusual now to see a five year tenure being greeted with great admiration. Gen C attempts to and wants to achieve many things within a short period. That is the new normal. Therefore, processes and policies that enable variety at work and opportunity to work with different leaders should become an inherent part of HR systems and practice.

Create a borderless organisation:

The organisation of the future will be one that relies less and less on 'experience' and is willing to 'experiment' for new products, methodologies and processes.

Gen C is made for it.

This generation accepts greater responsibilities and expects equal empowerment. Decision making would need to transcend hierarchy and look beyond 'experience', to younger leaders.

Creating a more open work environment free of protocols and limitations will become a necessity. Channels of communication will need to exist across many dimensions - upwards, sidewards and downwards.

Fungible Roles :

Loyalty to academic grounding is becoming less and less prominent. We see

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innumerable instances of people who have studied science opting for diametrically opposite disciplines and vice versa. Mid career and early career shifts have become the norm.

Organisations therefore will have to have systems that can provide training for people to learn different work disciplines and opt for lateral role transitions.

HR managers and organisational systems should be well prepared to have assessment systems that will help identify people who have the right attitude and passion along with minimal training, to take up a role. Traditional JDs that prescribed 'x' years of experience in a said role may soon become passé for most roles, except those that are very specialised and complex in nature.

Very soon, organisations may have systems that mandate role change every 2 - 3 years!

Ensuring connectedness:

With the advent of social media, yesterday's introverted geek is today an active social animal. The digital world is devoid of any caste system and information and ideas are free flowing. Titles, professions and age don't make or mar a discussion.

Today, expectations from organisations are no less.

The ability to voice thoughts, to connect effortlessly and to make a difference to the decision making process is a bare minimum expectation at every level. No more is decision making restricted to a few at the top. Coz, even if they did, Gen C will express its explicit views in the cyber world within seconds. Many organisations in the knowledge industry have learnt this lesson the hard way. Organisations would be wise to test their thoughts through instant voting systems, opinion corners and so forth to seek public opinion. This process has become far easier than ever before.

This generation will not be happy being the doer. We have to make room to be able to accommodate their thoughts. And accept the fact that they have a say in decision making.

Life@Work :

This is a generation that typically has better technology at home than what they see at work.

They have stopped going to banks, opting instead to do net banking from the comforts of their home. They have learnt to pay utility bills and track trends through easy analytics. They have stopped typing messages and opting for voice notes instead.

Gone are the days when people had pictures of their favorite gods next to their bed. Today, the omnipresent smart phone is the first thing that one reaches for to switch off the alarm and inevitably, check for mails. The space between work and life has disappeared. It is therefore perfectly fair to expect organisational systems to keep pace and provide them access to work issues.

HR managers have to be as tech savvy as their CIO to replicate this facilitating environment. Applying for leave or entering time sheets from a WAP enabled system or through personalised apps on their smart phones will become basic hygiene.

Analytics and decision support systems that free them from the four walls of the work place is bound to build a liberated and motivated work team

Creating online communities that help connect to people with similar interests and build 'best friends' within the organisation - long known to be a great retention technique

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Enliven the work place:

The traditional hierarchical form would change.

Work needs to be more 'fun' and more participative. As work force gets more and more globalised and distributed, floor walks will have to complement virtual chats and webinars. HR will have to find ways to keep this crowd hooked and happy.

Online gaming and quizzes, access to social networking sites, etc are well becoming a part of daily routine in many organisations. The rest will have to follow.

Entertaining Innovation:

This is an era that thrives on change and innovation. So be it a mobile application or a breakthrough idea in technology - this generation looks for an enabling organisation that allows him / her to follow that passionate idea. So Innovation Clubs, Halls of Fame that glorify 'IP / patent' holders, will have to be regular features

Of course, money continues to motivate, even if it is for a short period. This is a generation that today has its basic comforts of life. They are used to a certain life style and will expect to improve on that. So while money has its hold, what has changed is the priority that Gen C accords to issues like freedom to experiment, respect for skill rather than age / experience and being visible and vibrant at all times.

So what does all of this mean to us HR leaders? It spells: Stay young!

Organisations age with time, and so does their outlook. Gen C wants their leaders to talk to them in a language that they understand and relate to. No high pedestals.

So it is time we recognise that we have to be Gen C. Else we will be an extinct generation much sooner than we can handle.

For long, we have believed that knowledge and experience were within the top echelons of the organisation. There was a belief that 'thinkers' and 'doers' were different. Not anymore. This paradigm has been turned on its head. Gen C has as much access (probably more) to information as anyone else. Their ability to experiment and not be overshadowed by the baggage of the past is high. It is therefore important to move away from 'telling' them the solutions to 'engaging' them to find the solutions. This implies that we step down from the high pedestal and seek their involvement. A sense of openness and willing to listen becomes essential. Tools and systems that enable this will help us to 'connect' with this generation.

It's therefore time we stopped communicating. It's time we started connecting.

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GEN Y : A PASSING FAD OR REALITY?

NS RAJAN

Abstract

Successful employees are ones that realize that the young are more self aware & confident and in order to retain them it is imperative that their expectations from the workplace are fulfilled.

The global workforce is accommodating an influx of younger workers causing many companies to implement programs they had never considered. This article argues that to manage the expectation of Gen Y from the work place it is necessary for the HR function to make various tenets of HR value chain slightly flexible. One of these include social networking & referrals playing a pivotal role in attracting fresh Gen Y talent, and unique approaches like attracting Gen Y for specialized projects instead of normal routine activities.

About the Authors

NS Rajan is Partner and Global Practice Leader - People and Organisation, of Ernst & Young. He joined them over a decade ago to start the HR consulting practice in India. He is an alumnus of XLRI, Jamshedpur, with 28 years of experience in industry and consulting. Rajan is the former National President of NHRD Network, and recipient of the "HR Professional of the Year" for Excellence in 2008.

Organisations have increasingly recognised the need to lend primacy to the people aspects of management, in particular. The burgeoning growth of industry is transforming the landscape and globalisation has further fuelled the need to embrace the boundarylessness of the workforce and the immense possibilities it opens up. Even at a country level, with a workforce of its size, the powerful demographic dividend of being a young nation while other countries are ageing, India now aspires to be the skill capital of the world. While being labor surplus, there is an apparent talent deficit. With Indian economy growing with a fast paced GDP growth rate, the need to seize the initiative is preeminent and harnessing human capital is seen as the cornerstone of entrepreneurial success. Three distinct generations comprise the workforce today, all intermingled in the same workspace - Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), Gen X (born between 1965 and 1982) and Gen Y (born after 1983). Managing each is a challenge of its own, and Gen Y in particular being the youngest and with a inherent promise for tomorrow, needs attention. Dr Samuel Johnson, in his eternal fable "Rasselas" perhaps aptly captures the prevalent state about how organisations of today "pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow."

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Intellect has become the new form of property. Focused intelligence, the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and know-how has become a key differentiator in these times. With technology increasing the speed at which business is conducted, organisations are feeling constant pressure to stay ahead of the talent management curve. Unfortunately however, when it comes to focusing on generational diversity, most of the organisations have a sacrosanct set of systems and policies that apply to Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y. When it specifically comes to Gen Y, many HR Managers view their generational characteristics as merely a life state or fad that they will outgrow as they age. The same was said about Generation X as well - that the high percentage of their income considered disposable, the constant changing of jobs, their dependence on friendship networks, etc were just characteristics of being young. However, with Gen X now being in their late 30s now, there is little behavioural change in their attitude and outlook toward work and life. The same fallacy is being repeated with Gen Y by HR Managers by considering that Gen Y and its beliefs, attitudes and values are just a passing fad and will outgrow with time.

Gen Y, the "Millennial Generation" are technically defined as those born in the mid-1980s, belonging to the age group of 18 to 27 years and who are just entering the workforce. Having grown up in the post-liberalisation era, Gen Y has always had access to a plethora of lifestyle choices, which have helped shaped their preferences, attitude and choices. Children of Baby Boomers and younger siblings of Gen X, Gen Y grew up with their parents providing them everything they did not have themselves growing up. This environment encouraged the young minds to focus more on the higher order needs of Maslow's hierarchy such as self-realisation instead of mere stability and security. They are willing to experiment, take risks, and are open to novel professional experiences.

At the workplace as well, Gen Y are making a mark for themselves. Their enthusiasm and passion cannot be overlooked. Gen Y are changing the traditional workplace with their attitude and behavior. Gen Y doesn't hesitate to disagree to an idea, or does not respect any senior just by the virtue of them being one. For a young person, according respect is an acknowledgment of someone's ability or intellect and should be earned by the seniors and not demanded. Although money is important to them, they are driven more by the passion to follow their dreams and the drive to make a difference to the world. And as employers, we need to recognise the unique blend of talents and motivations that sets each individual apart.

Despite their uniqueness, the Gen Y at workplace are being commanded by the same set of rules as Baby Boomers or Gen X. This maybe because while managing Gen Y at workplace, organisations and the HR function form certain perceptions like "Focusing on Gen Y is irrelevant", "it's an ageing population and will eventually reach maturity in a matter of few years", "it's all about the life stage", "they will eventually outgrow", etc. This is because of the fact that even though life stages of Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y may be comparable to each other, the social and cultural fabric of the society and the economic determinants have changed over time. So while Baby Boomers thrived at a time when Pagers were just launched, Gen X belonged to the era when incoming calls on mobile were worth Rs.16/minute. Today, the Gen Y can make outgoing calls for as low as 50 paise/second. This goes on to show how the mindset of the Gen Y is conditioned vis-à-vis their predecessors. And therefore, it is very important that the HR function does not get carried away by the myths around Gen Y and deals with

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them with the way they want to be dealt with.

Going by the facts elucidated below, the debate on whether Gen Y is a passing fad or a reality can be put to rest.

- According to US Census Bureau, the wider Gen Y (15-29 years old) represents 25.47% of the world population.
- In India, Gen Y makes up for more than half of the population. Despite the large potential workforce, not all are 'employment ready' and so their talents are in short supply. The Generation Y in India is a remarkable group that is ambitious, optimistic, embraces change and has a clear sense of where they are headed. Most are 'entrepreneurial and business savvy, as well as technologically capable and connected and have a global outlook toward life, values and career.
- With about half of India's one billion people under the age of 25, Generation Y in India is the world's largest. Positioned in a time of exciting and rapid economic growth in the country, they are keen to participate in the country's future and success. The country's recent Parliament elections in 2009 saw a huge turnout of Gen Y population, demonstrating their ambition to take the country forward.
- Highly competitive, Gen Y is more than ever before seeking higher education and landing jobs in multi-national companies in areas such as IT, back office operations, media, strategy and management positions. With opportunities aplenty in the current economy, they are also job-hopping, something not seen in their parents' generation.
- According to 'The Best Companies to Work For' Study, 2001, 73% of the workforce in India is less than 35 years of age.
- The average age of employees in Indian IT/ITeS sector is between 27-29 years. Sectors such as DTH, VAS, Gaming, Advertising, etc are thriving on young talent.

These logical arguments ascertain that Gen Y at the workplace are a force that require renewed focus and attention by the HR function. Successful employers are the ones that recognise that the young are more self-aware and confident and in order to retain them, it is imperative that their expectations from workplace are fulfilled. The ability to get the best out of them is clearly a function of the willingness of organisations to understand their dispositions rather than controlling circumstances alone. A May 2010 global report by Ernst & Young, 'Managing today's global workforce' states, "The global workforce is accommodating an influx of younger workers, causing many companies to implement programmes they had never considered. Recognising the need to uncover talent in every area of the labour market, 56% of respondents said their companies might launch internal diversity or inclusiveness initiatives aimed at Gen X and Gen Y employees (11%), Baby Boomers (6%) or the entire organisation (39%)."

In order to manage the expectations of the Gen Y from workplace, it is required of the HR Function to make the various tenets of the HR value chain slightly flexible. For example:

1. Attracting Gen Y

Fresh graduates and post-graduates, Gen Y often find it difficult to place their resumes in the recruitment cell of organisations. Placement consultants seldom play an active role in bringing together a fresher Gen Y and a company

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that perfectly intertwine with each other. In such scenarios, Social Networking and referrals play a vital role in bringing in fresh Gen Y talent. A lot of organisations are attracting Gen Y for specialised projects and not run-of-the-mill office rigmarole. A MNC cement manufacturer in India brings in new talent to develop ideas on resource optimisation; the design of a hatchback manufactured by India's leading car manufacturer was actually the brainchild of its young talent. It is important that HR empowers Gen Y and gives them flexibility, resources and space to work on specialised projects. Workplace culture also plays a pivotal role in attracting Gen Y.

2. Professional growth & development

HR Managers must always take into account that even though they seem casual, the Gen Y is the most focused and formally educated of the generational groups. And this particular sect is aware that the key to remaining relevant in these ever changing times is on-going training. On-going training will not only keep them effective in their current job, but also ensure that they remain employable in the future as well. According to a survey conducted by Mercer in August 2011, advancement in career was the top priority in the age group 25-34 of the respondents surveyed, followed by workers in the age group of 35-54. Training opportunities was rated the third most important reward for workers in India. Gen Y is often labeled as being restless and unless they find themselves advancing in their careers, it is difficult to hold them back. It is therefore important that the HR function organises regular training and development programs to ensure the growth and development of Gen Y.

3. Managing total rewards

When it comes to compensation, Gen Y is more interested in "Cash In-hand". For them, the fixed component is more significant than performance-linked variable pay. In such a scenario, a one-size-fit-all compensation structure will not work for the Gen Y. The HR function must devise customised compensation structures keeping in mind the generational demands and needs of the workforce. So while a Baby Boomer would go in for options such as Employee Provident Fund or Retirement Benefits, a Gen X would go in for a compensation package that eases his/her tax burden or insurance cover for themselves and their families. A Gen Y, on the other hand will go in for an increased proportion of fixed component with mobile/travel reimbursement options and conveyance facilities. Also, Gen Y craves for instant recognition as it boosts their confidence and motivation to work. While Gen Y is open to constructive criticism, they also need acknowledgement for their performance and HR and leaders must do the same on a regular basis.

4. Going beyond employee engagement

When dealing with Gen Y, traditional employee engagement activities like celebrating Indian Day and Festivals at workplace is not enough. In short, there is no sure shot formula for engaging Gen Y. Very typical, but Gen Y has a wandering mind. They want to explore new ideas; they challenge and improvise existing norms, systems and practices; they want time for self to experiment. Going by their DNA, HR should give flexibility to Gen Y to design their own employee engagement rules. Google for example, after realising the hunger of its employees to innovate, allows its employees to devote 20% of their work-time on own experiments to develop new ideas. In certain other companies, Gen Y has formed social communities to interact with each other and connect with people with like interests. An MNC in India allows its Gen Y to interpret the values of the organisation the way they perceive them and practice them. Also, the HR

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function must always keep in mind that the Gen Y takes pride in associating itself with social causes. Engaging Gen Y with companies CSR initiatives such as Tree Plantation Drives, teaching the underprivileged, etc, and encouraging them to be more socially and environmentally responsible citizens can go a long way in enhancing employee engagement levels.

5. Work-life Balance

Gen Y follows the adage "We don't live to work, we work to live" to the 'T'. While the basics of work-life balance applies as much to them as to others, Gen Y likes to pursue other areas of their interest - be it educational, social, cultural or even entrepreneurial beyond work hours. Gen Y are dedicated, committed and professional enough to adhere to deadlines. At the same time, they desire the flexibility to work as per their own comfort zones. When they do the work and from where should not matter. Employee friendly policies & practices such as Flexi time policy, work from home with manager consent for 1-2 days in a week, shuttle services from Metro to Office, mandatory 15 days off in a year, day care facilities & gym, are being introduced.

6. Retaining Gen Y

Surprisingly enough, HR does not have to shower fancy salary packages to retain Gen Y. While tweaking the traditional elements of HR value chain may be important, there are certain other intangible components such as work ethics, respect for self and seniors, camaraderie within the team, interaction with senior leadership, etc that play a pivotal role in retaining and attracting Gen Y. Young generation craves for being a part of execution of strategic ideas and their enthusiasm and energy levels can be leveraged to a great deal. Gen Y feels motivated to go to office each day if motivated, encouraged, made a part of team and acknowledged that their efforts contribute to accomplishing the shared vision of the organisation. Contrary to popular notion, young minds of today are not vain, unreliable or erratic. Gen Y never gives up the quest to move from a job towards a career and ultimately towards a calling, where work is in itself a source of intrinsic fulfillment.

We would be chasing the chimera in our quest to garner the best if we fall short of knowing Gen Y, understanding them for what they are, and building deeper relationships with them. As Franklin Roosevelt aptly observed, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future". It is in the interest of organisations to help unlock the latent potential of Gen Y as indeed the best of them is ahead of them.

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THE WORLD IS STORMED BY GEN Y, ARE WE READY TO CAPITALIZE?

SRIHARI UDUPA and Dr VARUN BHASKAR

Abstract

With the economy growing, the market place, which now is increasingly getting global, is throwing up huge opportunities. Organisations have a great appetite for making the most of these new opportunities. This needs more and more, nimble, productive, creative talent. Receptive, creative, open to change, willing to take on responsibilities and deliver. Gen Y however have grown in a very different environment and so are their expectations. Utilising their talent and getting the best from them is a huge challenge. Authors examine in this article, the characteristics of Gen Y and recommend what the Organization, Human Capital experts and Line Managers could do to maximize talent potential and make it mutually rewarding for all.

About the Authors

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Let us see who they are, what their characteristics are? What options do organisations have to chanelise their energies for productive use?

1) Who are they? Different researchers have taken marginally different age groups for their study. However, by and large it is safe to describe Gen Y as those born between 1980 and 2000. (See Figure 1) For easy understanding, we have superimposed global population distribution of the US Census report with the various generations.

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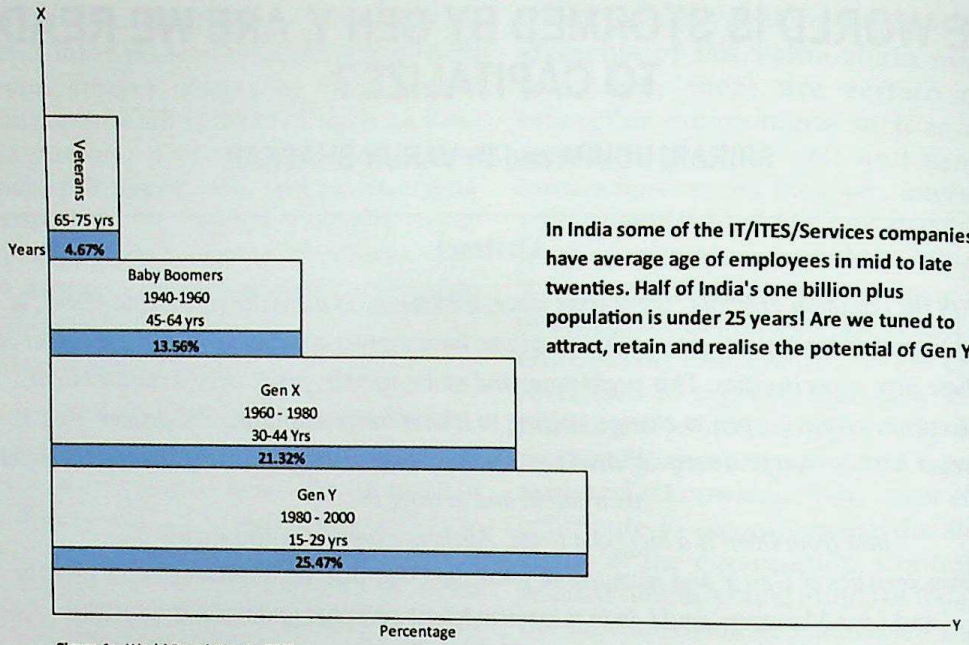

In India some of the IT/ITES/Services companies have average age of employees in mid to late twenties. Half of India's one billion plus population is under 25 years! Are we tuned to attract, retain and realise the potential of Gen Y?

Figure 1: World Population in 2009
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base

2) Characteristics of Gen Y, what is special for India?

We did a quick survey of the major studies done on Gen Y. The summary of the characterstics attributed to Gen Y are given in Figure 2 below:

Characterstics	Research						
	Deloitte (a)	E&Y (b)	KPMG (c)	SHRM (d) & (e)	Johnson Control (f)	London Business School (g)	Society for the Advancement of Management (h)
Tech Savvy / Digitally & Globally connected	X	X		X	X	X	X
Educated		X	X		X	X	X
Confident / Autonomous / Self Reliant	X		X	X	X	X	X
Entrepreneurial	X		X		X		
Success Driven	X			X	X		X
Inclusive & Diverse	X	X	X		X	X	
Civic, enviornment & Community minded	X		X		X		X
Workplace Flexibility		X	X		X		
Learning, Mobility & Faster Growth		X	X	X			
Meaning, Purpose & challenges at work		X			X	X	X
Requires Feedback		X	X			X	X
Worklife Balance / Family & Friends		X	X	X		X	X
Egalitarian & team player			X	X	X	X	

References: a, b, c, d, e, f, g & h

Figure 2: Characterstics of Gen Y as reflected by multiple studies

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While all the above reflect trends and are applicable to most, for India, the top 3 requirements for Gen Y as per Johnson Controls study are:

a) Opportunities for learning. Now, the World is the play-ground. It is open and provides endless opportunities. The Gen Y would like to keep control over their careers by continuous learning.

b) Quality of life is important. Corporate Executive Board-Mint study however says, in India, Gen Y employees are more willing to put in hours at the office than Baby Boomers

c) Meaningful, intellectually challenging and engaging work.

CEB study also states that for India, career and development opportunities enhance intent to stay. In fact these come ahead of compensation!

Workplace Landscape

We have tried to comprehensively capture (see Figure 3) Gen Y's perspectives, requirements, implications and possible response options for the Organisation Leadership, Human Capital (HC) Executives and Line Managers.

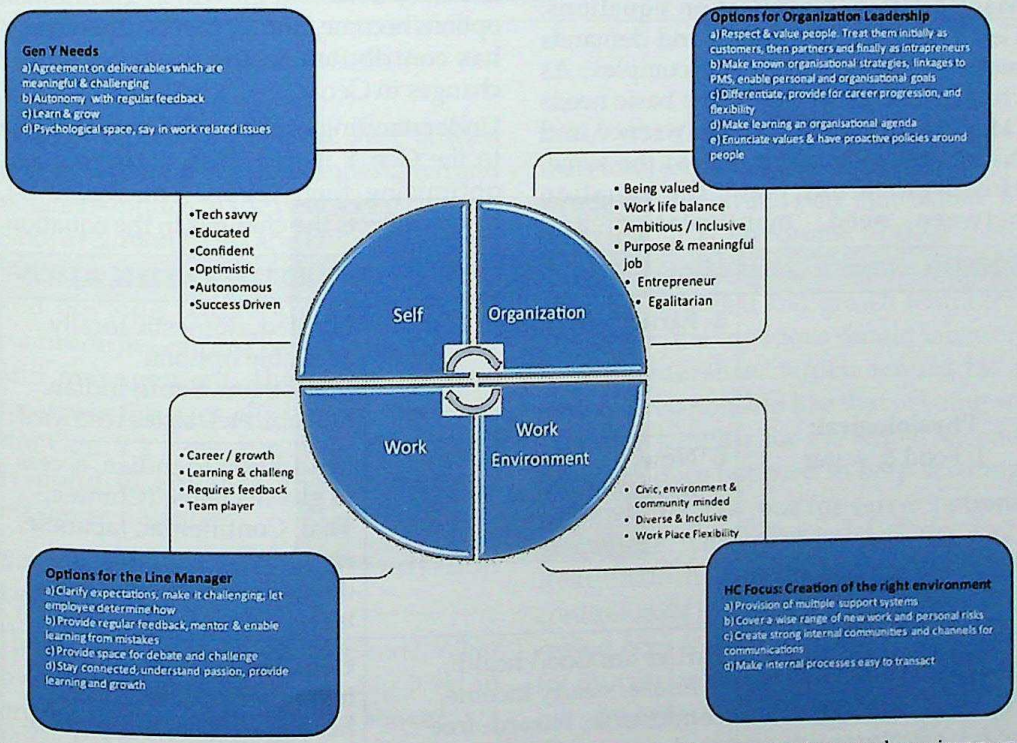
Gen Y Needs
a) Agreement on deliverables which are meaningful & challenging
b) Autonomy with regular feedback
c) Learn & grow
d) Psychological space, say in work related issues
Options for Organization Leadership
a) Respect & value people. Treat them initially as customers, then partners and finally as intrapreneurs
b) Make known organisational strategies, linkages to PMS, enable personal and organisational goals
c) Differentiate, provide for career progression, and flexibility
d) Make learning an organisational agenda
e) Enunciate values & have proactive policies around people
•Tech savvy
•Educated
•Confident
•Optimistic
•Autonomous
•Success Driven
• Being valued
• Work life balance
• Ambitious / Inclusive
• Purpose & meaningful job
• Entrepreneur
• Egalitarian
Self
Organization
Work
Work Environment
• Career / growth
• Learning & challeng
• Requires feedback
• Team player
• Civic, environment & community minded
• Diverse & Inclusive
• Work Place Flexibility
Options for the Line Manager
a) Clarify expectations, make it challenging; let employee determine how
b) Provide regular feedback, mentor & enable learning from mistakes
c) Provide space for debate and challenge
d) Stay connected, understand passion, provide learning and growth
HC Focus: Creation of the right environment
a) Provision of multiple support systems
b) Cover a wise range of new work and personal risks
c) Create strong internal communities and channels for communications
d) Make internal processes easy to transact

Figure 3: i) Characteristics of Gen Y, their attitude/expectations from the organisation, work environment and work (white boxes) ii) Possible response options for the three corresponding constituents viz., the Organisational Leadership, HC Executives and Line Managers (blue boxes)

In summary, what is Gen Y telling us?

Gen Y attributes and values seem to be telling us, as managers, the following:

i) Let's agree on my deliverables, make it meaningful and challenging

ii) Let me accomplish them my way, give me feedback so that I know where I stand

iii) I need to know why of what affects me, permit me to question and challenge; I want to have my say

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iv) Mentor me, I need to learn and grow, that too fast!

Response to Gen Y attributes and needs, our perspectives

1) Three constituents of workplace landscape. To enable focused response, we have broken up the landscape into three constituents. The Organisation, primarily influenced by its Leadership, which should include Human Capital (HC) Leader as well, the Work Environment, where HC Executives become the major protagonists and lastly influencers of Work, represented by the Line Managers.

2) Understanding the change in Need, Manifestation, Gratification equations. Gen Y with its new values and demands make the work place more complex. As Human Beings, in Gen Y, the basic needs (Maslow), drivers (Paul Lawrence and Nitin) and motivators remain the same. However, in our view, the equation between need, manifestation and gratification has undergone a change. Economic, social and cultural changes have multiplied the manifestations of a particular need and created almost geometric increase in the gratification options. Information revolution and social networking, have contributed to increasing the manifestations and feasibility of instant gratification, as it were, of the tech-savvy generation.

There is, very little change in the manifestation of the lower order needs, but the gratification options have increased. However, once we go beyond physiological needs, the above observations of multiplied manifestations and growth in gratification options become more apparent. This change has contributed to the huge behaviour changes in Gen Y.

Understanding of the equation in relation to the Gen Y is critical in managing and optimising their talent. The figure (4), below reflects the changes in the equation.

NEED	MANIFESTATION/S	NEED GRATIFICATION
Physiological: I. Food & water	a **Earlier on:** Hunger & thirst	Limited, domestic locally available options (Rajasthani, South Indian, Punjabi, etc), tastes restricted.
	b **Now:** Continues to remain the same	In addition to Indian, access to global cusine (Chinese, Thai, Continental, Japanese, etc.) Multiple options to develop and enjoy exacting tastes
Safety and security: II. hazards, more physical	**Earlier on:** Good health, a house, steady income, comfortable, hazard- free environment, pension	Good, permanent job, insurance policies for life, health, accident, very good working conditions
	b **Now:** Some of the earlier ones continue, but mostly have extended beyond physical to psychological (harassment, retribution, ethical conflicts); focus of pension has shifted to higher earning and spending now!	Risk coverage has extended beyond health, life, accident to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), strong organisational policies to minimise stress, Company policies around code of conduct, ethics, retribution

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NEED	MANIFESTATION/S	NEED GRATIFICATION
III Esteem	**Earlier on:** Physical a Wealth, accomplishment, recognition	Good job in MNC, PSU, Banks, IAS, etc., & perks; promotion, monetary rewards
	Now: Goes beyond only wealth, has become more pronounced to location, b type of house, type of car, consumption of branded stuff, acknowledgement as a value creator, great talent, innovator, making a difference, harbinger of change	Job hopping, more salary, more perks, assignments anywhere in the world, accomplishment could be in any sector/field, industry, music, sports, social, global assignment, so one could opt for anything close to his calling, access is much more

Figure 4

What is reflected above are very limited examples of the changed manifestation and satiation options in the new social context. Since evolution levels and environment are different, the options are not always linear and obvious. There are symptoms of confusion in Gen Y as well. The leadership and management, therefore, need to recognise the over all change, appreciate the Gen Y's new appetite, tastes and respond to enhance engagement and maximise potential.

Suggested options for Organisation Leaders

How can organisations respond? What could be done at the leadership level in organisations to deal with the above?

1) No mollycodling, but do not take Gen Y for granted. Educated, self reliant, autonomous Gen Y expects respect, demands space & freedom to contribute, challenge the system, make a difference. Their esteem and actualisation needs, drive to learn (make sense of the world and self) and drive to defend (the loved ones, resources and beliefs) have evolved majorly at the work place. Definition of their position as a stakeholder is, therefore, essential. Gen Y needs to know where they stand and how they matter. In our view, it is important to treat them initially as customers, each needs to be attracted, retained and grown with care. Thereafter, the equations should move on to a partnership, which would be a stronger relationship like that of being an exclusive supplier for the employee and he or she does not need to keep scouting or be on the look out for career options elsewhere. The trust level is the key. Responsibility is on both parties to continuously invest in the relationship by seeing how to increase the contributions for mutual benefit. Finally, the role has to be transformed into one of an intrapreneur, where the employee, takes on responsibility for the future of the organisation in every way, customer, products, services and its people.

2) Make Self-Work-Life meaningful. Organisation strategy, plans to achieve it and the clarity in individual expectations are important. Ability to have a say, influence and seeing its linkages to the Performance Management System gets

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Gen Y intrinsically connected with the organisation. Gen Y are constantly reflecting back on relationships between self, work and life. (London Business School: The Reflective Generation: Young Professionals' Perspectives On Work, Career and Gender).

In 2009, HCL Technologies posted it annual plans on the firm's intranet site, the MyBlueprint portal. Eight thousand managers took advantage of the opportunity to review the recordings. The network was buzzing..they loved the transparency..knowledge sharing...was extraordinary. Everybody felt able to contribute to the thinking and planning process. People understood the challenges better, owned the plan and could align themselves with the strategy as I had never seen before. (Vineet Nayar, Employees First, Customers Second).

3) Gen Y wants differentiation, enable it. Differentiation, we all know promotes meritocracy. The feeling of Managers normally, on the contrary is that, 'as it is there is heavy attrition, any differentiation would only make it worse. Treating everybody equally also minimizes need for explanations and keeps everybody happy'. The culture of differentiation needs to be instilled. Esteem and drive to acquire (objects and experiences that improve our status relative to others) have new manifestations. Belief in is providing and getting value. Career advancement and growth are strong anchors for stability. From an organisational perspective, like one would do for customers, differentiation based on the value creation is what is expected by Gen Y. To further differentiate, the organisations therefore need to have proper systems to measure and reward performance, identify potential, provide challenges and varied experiences, resulting in growth and rewarding careers.

4) Make learning a permanent agenda. The drive to learn and make sense of the world is getting increasingly relevant. As the Quality Guru, Edward Deming said, 'learning enhances our capacity to create results'. No one seems to know this better than Gen Y. Independence and control over their destiny is important for Gen Y, which is made feasible only through lifelong learning. Potential of the people determine the potential of the organisation. Organisations need to continuously invest in its people, whose capacity for innovation and contribution is limitless.

5) Line Ownership for development and growth of team. Managers accountability to the team needs to be defined. Provision of feedback on performance, having conversations on careers and provision of learning and growth opportunities, and taking care of the well being of the team members are inseparable functions of the manager. This needs to be understood as such. Gen Y needs mentors, inclusive leaders and not managers.

6) Egalitarian society helps Gen Y flourish; facilitate this. Transparent, open, proactive and inclusive HC policies reflecting equity and fairness are necessary; creation and utilisation of multiple channels of communication are important for Gen Y to stay connected.

HC Focus: Responsive Work Environment.

Is the Work Environment reflecting care and concern? Work environment always was and would continue to be only a hygiene factor. However, given the demands the organisation puts on the employees, a good work environment could help in enhancing and sustaining co-dependency. The old needs of physiological, safety, social security, drive to

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acquire needs of humans have not changed. Gen Y have extended the concept of support, beyond environmental comfort and basics to provision of systems / mechanisms to keep work and the hearth going as it were.

1) Multiple support systems: With the onset of nuclear families and both couples working, the Gen Y needs to be constantly multitasking, both at personal and business levels. This pressure gets translated on to the work, and hence provision of multiple support systems as well as flexibility is valued. These systems could be as simple as provision of concierge services, crèche, onsite gym, etc.,, to more complex options for flexible working hours to telecommuting, etc.

2) Safety net extended to cover variety of risks: For Gen Y, today the concept of safety has now extended beyond the normal physical sense to almost every type of risk an employee could be vulnerable. The risk coverage today, is therefore not restricted to social security systems for individual's life and health, but to personal violations such as harassment, retribution, ethical conflicts, including those at home. Besides, insurance plans to take care of life and health, organisations need to create policies around ethics, code of conduct, diversity and inclusion as well as have Employee Assistance Programs, which are becoming a common occurrence now.

3) Internal processes easy to transact.

a) How strong are our hierarchies and silos? The online, internet Gen would have no patience to wade through the bureaucracy. Informal culture, open door policy, less and less of bureaucracy would enable repose trust. Similarly, focus on outcomes (rather than adhering to old forms of disciplines such as staying long hours at office because of boss' perception of hardwork and loyalty), empowerment on travel, attendance and means of work, etc.help in grounding Gen Y.

b) Creation of internal communities (based on interest groups, such as women's networks, corporate social responsibility, sports, cultural initiatives, etc.) are important ways to getting Gen Y bond and connect. Opening up of multiple channels of communication such as through Web casts and intranet sites for updates on performance, facilitating discussions and debates, sharing thoughts and ideas on organisational issues are important linkages to ensure continued flow of energy.

Again, the environmental factors referred above, address only the hygiene elements and hence have limited influence on engagement and performance. However with the organisations making stretch demands and the work situations getting increasingly stressful, absence of such support mechanisms could reflect lack of sensitivity and therefore demotivating.

Line Managers, creators of the moments of truth for Gen Y.

Managers are the major influencers in the system. While the peers and the environment do continuously impact individual's attitudes and behaviours, the managers have always underestimated their potential to influence. It is through the Manager that the individual experiences the spirit of the organisation. 'The onus of building loyalty is truly on us', says EY Americas Vice Chair, Steve Hove (www.et.com/us/en/service)

1) Relationship orientation: A generation ago, the power distance was high. Position, power and age were fit enough criteria for respect. Additionally, since

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there were not many choices, acceptance of status quo was the norm. Organisations possessed means of wealth creation. Employee was only one input in the process. Periodic recognition and throwing away of goodies were adequate motivators. Today, Gen Y are educated, often more knowledgeable than the boss, capable, worldly wise, confident, etc. Power distances are, therefore, diminishing all the time. Today, respect, trust and loyalty are a function of an individual's ability to add value. Gen Y need to be acknowledged as a major value creators. Interdependency needs to be recognised. Managers need to understand the psyche of Gen Y and be a partner in the growth. They prefer relationship oriented leaders than task oriented approach to leading them. ('Y' are they different? A study of Gen Y at work, their views and how they are viewed. The GMP Group and Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore).

2) Value Based, Mentor Leadership: For the previous generations, promotion was a big gratification. Depending on the origin, retirement at a relatively senior position was considered enough for self actualisation. Today, the internet generation, origin does not stop one from dreaming big. Employees desire everything possible - just making it big, altruism, betterment of mankind, leaving a legacy are important goals to be achieved. Employees no longer want to be only employees, they want to be equal stake holders. Major drivers are wanting to make a difference, being an innovator, co-creator of wealth. Motivation through extrinsic means are not enough. Inner drive, volition for the purpose are more fundamental. The old notions of command and control are no longer valid. In this context, mentoring, facilitating realisation of life mission for Gen Y are critical. Value based and mentor leadership represent major source of growth and inspiration. Emmisary Partners (www. Emmisary.com).

Are our Line Managers strategising such moments of truth consciously? Different strokes for different folks. Different strokes for the same folks at different times.

3) Be sensitive while pushing for performance: The single most important factor in relation to work life balance is that Gen Y want autonomy over when and how to work. This autonomy is closely linked with the idea of self managing and being in charge. ('Reflexive Generation', study by London Business School). For Gen Y, rather than race to the top of the corporate ladder, success is increasingly defined by the achievement of personal, family and in many cases, community oriented goals. (Emmisary Partners; www.emmisary.com). Hence the managers need to have a clear understanding of when to stretch on either Task or People (XY Theory, Mcgregor). While pushing for performance, Managers need to reflect the sensitivity and care.

Conclusion: Tune in for the competitive edge!

The payoffs of Gen Y are immense. Globalisation, access to information, competition and changing social values have made governance, leadership and management of institutions much more complex. With each of them saying 'I am different, treat me as such', Gen Y has added its own dynamics to the workplace. However, knowing that the lasting competitive advantage would come only through its people, particularly the burgeoning Gen Y, organisations would need to get a grip on steering their energies.

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Awareness, acknowledgement and action needs to start at the top. Permeating this spirit and creating alignment at all levels of leadership and finally being sensitive to all stake holders, the ability to embrace one and all in the organisational journey would alone be the recipe for success in the decades ahead. Has your organisation started on this journey yet?

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RESHAPING THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS

V C GOPALRATNAM

Abstract

In a young technology organization like Cisco, does Gen Y influence IT or is it the other way round?

Imagine a business world where business interactions take place around the globe, employees track their time not in hours but in moments working round the clock and employees connecting to their work through devices of their own choosing? How can organizations respond to this challenge?

This article discusses few interesting initiatives at Cisco — BYOT (Bring your own Technology) — that responds to the tech savvy generation entering the workforce who are used to controlling their work tools and environment. In addition, IWE (Integrated Work Experience) a high collaboration tool those employees to connect the right people with right expertise, resources and content at the right time regardless of geographical boundaries.

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Gopal has worked in the hi-tech industry for over 23 years in consulting, re-engineering, management, and leadership capacities for multinational corporations. Before joining Cisco in 2007, Gopal was the business leader of GENPACT' .Gopal has a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering from Chennai, India. He is an M.S. in Chemical Engineering, an M.S.in Environmental Risk Studies, and an M.B.A. in MIS/ Finance.

New generations of workers and technologies are having powerful influence on the future of work.

In the technology sector, the workforce is evolving, with Gen Y engaged in social media, video, and mobility technologies. This shift is forcing businesses to rethink their organisational work environments to continue meeting the needs of the new wave of employees. For Cisco, this means leveraging IT and collaboration to transform the workplace in this dynamic culture of change.

The arrival of Gen Y in the corporate world brings with it a new workplace culture that technology companies must choose to embrace for business success. Taking place in parallel with the arrival of this younger generation are other factors such as the globalisation of business and the

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emergence of game-changing new tools for collaboration and mobility. In recent years, these developments have blended to bring about a marked shift in how modern companies are doing business.

For employees in the new workplace, the boundaries between work and life have begun to blur. Because business interactions take place around the world, employees track their time not in hours but in moments, working around the clock as needed for business collaboration. Social networking technologies, too, play an important role in collaboration today. Workspaces in this new environment are tailored for mobile workers and are often virtual in nature, with employees connecting to their work world through the devices of their own choosing. These changing conditions are not without challenges for the companies that embrace them, but they also offer many rewards in the form of business success and the ability to attract and accommodate a talented and tech-savvy new generation of employees.

IT: Pushing the Envelope

While Gen Y has partial responsibility for introducing these changes to the workplace, IT organisations are the real drivers here. In preparation, IT must be armed with a vision on how it can act as a conduit to meet business objectives. How is Gen Y influencing IT? The relationship is complex and fascinating in terms of its evolutionary effects. What we are seeing is that the Gen Y workforce, a fast-growing majority within many companies today, enters the corporate world with a set of expectations that companies must address to attract and retain top talent.

For example, Gen Y employees — who have grown up with technology — expect to use the network in an unencumbered way with unfettered access. Typically, they use the same mobile device to access personal and professional information. Prone to work in teams, they are highly collaborative by nature and not likely to feel comfortable in being confined to office cubicles. They are naturals at multitasking and they look for fast results. Members of Gen Y rely fiercely on their mobile devices and engage almost constantly in social media and video. One characteristic that is specific to this generation in India is a focus on finding employers with advanced IT infrastructure.

Broadly speaking, Gen Y employees enter the workplace from their universities with a technology perspective that focuses on what devices they use, and how they use those devices to access social media. They want to handpick their own technologies, especially in emerging markets. Once they've entered the workplace, Gen Y members expect employers to allow them to use the computer of their choice and have access to their preferred mobile and technology applications. Video-based applications almost always are preferred to conventional audio and e-mail based services. Hence it becomes imperative for employers to constantly assess and provide such capabilities.

Bring Your Own Technology

The increasing presence of Gen Y has forced companies to rethink their enterprise platforms and continued support for legacy applications. Members of today's young tech-savvy generation who are entering the workforce are used to controlling their work tools and environment, and they want to choose how they can be most productive. To support this, companies that want to welcome this generation and its new work styles must change the way they approach IT. Traditionally, companies have standardised on particular platforms, which IT has uniformly supported. In the

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new model, IT should not care what type of end device the user has. Instead, IT needs to turn its focus to the enterprise network and deliver a solution that allows employees and other stakeholders to access the network from any device.

At Cisco, for example, we have embarked on a long-term vision called "Any Device, Anywhere, Any Time." The commoditisation of smartphones, tablets, and laptops in recent years resulted in our employees wanting to use their own devices for everything from accessing the company email and intranet, to using corporate business applications. This change took shape in a relatively short timeframe that challenged corporate IT support.

In response, Cisco IT developed the Any Device, Anywhere, Any Time program, a Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) concept whose goal is to allow greater choice in devices while delivering a common, predictable user experience that maintains or enhances global organisational competitiveness and security.

Cisco IT recognised the need to embrace the instantaneous use of these next-generation technologies to enable productivity, rather than using the typically historic approach of limiting and managing the deployment of new technologies as they enter the workplace. This rapid adoption of new client technologies has led to the advent and implementation of other enterprise approaches, tools, and technologies that have created communities of users and allowed a transformational change in the ways that IT provides support and end users are able to use the knowledge of peers to solve common problems. The Any Device, Anywhere, Any Time journey at Cisco is an ongoing and long-term investment for the future.

Collaborating and Engaging in Social Media

Along with the freedom for employees to choose their own devices, another important characteristic of the changing workplace is increased collaboration to boost business productivity. The arrival of Gen Y makes this engagement simple through the use of social media, a natural progression for them. They are savvy bloggers and tweeters; they communicate through video and instant messaging; they create internal wikis and other productivity tools and promote use of social media to other employees—with the end result of a more globalised, productive, and knowledgeable workforce, and the creation of user communities within the company to strengthen corporate culture.

Companies can use social media to improve communication to and between employees, and to interact with customers. The explosion of social media has empowered people to engage in an increasing number of online conversations and interactions, which organisations are beginning to incorporate into their workflow to respond to customers in a strategic and measureable way. At Cisco, we support our aggressive growth strategy by promoting a culture that maximises collaboration. This lets us keep our employees focused on the "big picture" and using technology and social media to push the limits of flexible work design.

But social networking has its downsides, too, as far as large companies are concerned. Younger employees are often unfamiliar with acceptable user policies and codes of confidentiality. Through Twitter feeds and Facebook posts, these users could unwittingly jeopardise intellectual property or a company's reputation.

Does that imply that IT organisations must try to exercise strict control around

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employees' use of social media? That would be impossible. Actually, the appropriate employee use of social media is a supervisory issue more than a technology issue. It is about the adoption of policies and best practices to help employees utilise these new communication vehicles in a more discriminating manner. In other words, the restrictions are not there from a technology perspective, but rather in the form of governance. I personally believe that a good acceptable-user policy can provide guidelines for employees on how to use social media without jeopardising the company or impeding the benefits these tools can yield.

Globalisation and the Changing Workplace

Globalisation has caused our world to shrink. To stay competitive in such a globalised marketplace, companies must continuously innovate. As a company's business expands globally and employees increasingly adopt IT tools for mobility and collaboration, businesses need to ensure that their organisational work environment keeps pace with changing needs.

For Cisco, this means that we use IT and collaboration to transform the workplace. One of the ways we do this is through a highly collaborative tool called the Integrated Workforce Experience (IWE). IWE allows employees to connect the right people with the right expertise, resources, and content at the right time, regardless of geography. IWE also gives Cisco employees the power to communicate more effectively, whether they are on the road, on telepresence, or working from home.

We use IWE to collaborate internally or externally with online workspaces, project wikis, desktop sharing, virtual white boarding, blogging, and other tools — and our employees learn by leveraging the collective intelligence that is created within this growing collaboration.

At Cisco and other emerging technology companies, collaborative tools such as IWE and technologies for mobility are becoming catalysts to blur the boundaries of physical offices and geography — which in turn results in changing workplace requirements. These two trends in particular, collaboration and mobility, are having a powerful impact on the way companies design their workplaces.

Looking at collaboration, it's important to remember that although we have myriad technologies and social media for virtual collaboration, employees still require face-to-face collaboration, and the workplace must address that need. Traditional workplaces, defined by individual offices and cubicle farms, are not designed for face-to-face collaboration. They are optimised for individual productivity, and for a workplace environment based on a set schedule of daytime office hours in one particular geographic region.

The second trend, mobility, has created a global environment in which information now follows the worker, rather than the worker coming to a physical location to get information. User mobility allows a more fluid use of spaces within a building, a more fluid use of campus environments, and it enables employees to work anywhere, any time, whether it's at home, on a customer site, or in a café.

Taking these trends into consideration, building designers can now integrate IT, networking, and building operations systems to develop workplace environments that both empower a company's workforce and reduce resource consumption. A properly designed workplace requires less building infrastructure, which takes up less space,

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produces less heat, and consumes less power than traditional workplaces — while supporting employees more effectively.

At Cisco we use a modern approach to real estate called the Cisco Connected Workplace, which successfully reconciles business demands with environmental responsibility. This initiative creates more effective work environments that house more people in less space — environments that are purpose-built for collaborative and highly mobile employees. Over the long term, it also saves money and resources. The Cisco Connected Workplace virtually eliminates dedicated workspaces and increases shared spaces that are available to everybody, adapting to the increasingly mobile and collaborative work styles of Cisco employees and contractors. It raises productivity, enhances collaboration, and increases employee satisfaction — all while lowering real estate and technology costs and helping companies reduce their carbon emissions.

Tools that help employees work remotely and reduce real estate and energy costs are gaining traction. Outside of corporate offices, IT also plays a critical role in helping organisations increase productivity for their mobile workforces while demonstrating environmental sustainability and reducing costs. By taking advantage of next-generation broadband, wireless, and new integration technologies, organisations are able to become eco-friendly and improve their efficiencies, maximising their profits.

IT Defines Culture

We have discussed how new technologies and the youngest generation of employees, the Gen Y, are changing the models by which emerging technology companies do business. Among the most prominent ways these changes manifest themselves is through corporate culture. With so many of the changes we are seeing being technology based, IT organisations are now shaping and defining corporate culture. Technology adoption and the policies for this technology are fast becoming the medium through which the character of a company emerges, just as the network continues to be the platform to unify the workspace and connect employees, customers, and partners through collaboration.

Although new-age technologies, social media, and initiatives such as BYOT arrive with some risks and challenges, they can also drive key business imperatives. We can achieve success in these new environments through a combination of culture, process, and technology, and companies determined to achieve success will find ways to welcome and adopt these changes.

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NEW APPROACHES TO TALENT MANAGEMENT – DO WE REALLY "GET" GEN Y?

DR. GANESH NATARAJAN

Abstract

In the world of 4P's of Kotler and the 7 S's of McKinsey - anyone heard of the 5 F's culture ? Responding to the Gen Y challenge Zensar has created this culture — Fast, Flexible, Focused, Friendly and Fun.

This article speaks about the new methods and path breaking initiatives of talent management that the IT industry and the company has been practicing to attract the best in the organization and also to keep attrition levels of critical talent to single digits . Celebrating "arsonists" who can point to bureaucratic bottlenecks and an initiative called "Crazy Times calls for Crazy organizations" suggesting radical new products and services are only a couple of them.

About the Author

Dr. Ganesh Natarajan is Vice Chairman & CEO of Zensar Technologies.. He is also President of the IT Sector and a member of the Management Board of the 3.25 billion USD RPG Group.

An alumnus of BIT Ranchi, NITIE, IIT Bombay and the Harvard Business School, Ganesh actively stewards various professional bodies. Ganesh is the author of four McGraw Hill Books on Business Process Reengineering and Knowledge Management and other publications on the IT industry and inspired leadership. He has been recognized by Ernst & Young for exceptional entrepreneurship and elected Fellow of the Computer Society of India.

There was a time when management books used to talk about the critical resources all firms would have to manage as Money, Machines, Materials and Men. It is interesting but not surprising to note that in modern times it is the resource called youth that leadership teams get most stressed about managing. We have come a long way indeed from the early days when jobs were scarce and sought by large numbers of men. Once they succeeded in getting a job in a good corporation, it was rare indeed for a man to even contemplate making a change. In our own country Tata and Birla men and later men having the privilege of walking through the portals of Hindustan Lever, Metal Box, Larsen & Toubro, etc would feel that they had totally arrived and work their way up to the top or a few notches below it without the thought of an alternative firm or career ever crossing their minds.

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What has changed today, particularly in India is the plethora of opportunities in front of young well-educated men and women. The scramble to be a Day Zero or Day One employer on the campuses of India's premier Technology and Management schools, the inducements that have to be provided to get young people to join and the redefinition of Maslow's Need Hierarchy principles everyday in the highly competitive firms in all industries specially the new economy services firms are all symptomatic of a new war to attract, enable and retain talent that is being played out on the competitive battleground of corporate India. This environment of jobs and alternatives in plenty has driven a different form of behaviour in the young Generation Y minds today. They seek to be wooed before and after their decision to join a company and expect that the honeymoon will continue through their tenure in the organisation.

Intervening in a MBS Second Year discussion on the Zensar Case Study presented at Harvard Business School early this year, I had an opportunity to discuss new methods of talent management that our industry and specifically our company has been practising to keep attrition levels of critical talent in single digits. The word "love" which was used to describe the employee engagement philosophy at Zensar met with some incredulous looks and expressions of disbelief from the hard nosed business school population initially, but at the end of a very engaging class conducted masterfully by Professor David Garvin, there was agreement that new expectations and aspirations of the next generation would certainly need techniques that could not be found in standard text books of human resource management.

Attracting the best to the Organisation

The confidence that prevails in the industry today was underlined by the confident numbers projected for the current and next fiscal by NASSCOM. In spite of sluggish economic recovery in the Western countries, the global technology spend is growing by 4 % and global sourcing by 10%, a clear reflection of the fact that IT budgets are rising and the cost and quality imperative are ensuring a renewed focus on offshore outsourcing. The projected growth in IT services revenues of over 22% with BPO predicted to show a more sedate growth of 14% and the rather conservative growth estimate of 18% for the next fiscal are all pointers to a period of prosperity that lies ahead.

The new optimism reflects in hiring as well with over 240 thousand new additions expected to the industry headcount this year with a significantly higher percentage of freshers to keep the costs low. This shift in hiring patterns places a large onus on colleges and internal and third party training mechanisms to deliver quality consistently across the newer generations of students and academic institutions that would like to join the industry growth party.

From this point of view it has been interesting to note the evolution in the methods of talent preparation and management in the last few quarters. The traditional model of selecting students from chosen campuses and then putting them through intensive training in the company is being supplemented and in many cases surpassed by new models. The most innovative of these is the "source and train" model where the skill requirements of the firm in a variety of areas are clearly spelt out to two or three high quality providers and tests designed to screen candidates provided by them. The providers are then authorised to act as ambassadors of the firm and required to fan out in new educational institutions and locations to identify candidates with aptitude and provide them intensive training in the desired skills as well as communications and other soft skills to

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make them worthy of employment in the firm.

The "source and train" model that is being evolved by a group comprising Global Talent Track, SEED Infotech and a handful of other providers is one of the rare virtuous cycles that provide value to all players in the eco-system. The firm benefits by substantially expanding the width and depth of its talent search and eliminating all recruitment and training costs associated with this portion of its hiring, the institutions benefit by providing placement to its students in companies which would hitherto not have come to campus, the students get access to their dream jobs and the providers of course add to their top lines and develop long terms partnerships with firms in the sector. There are many variants of the model emerging, which include centres of excellence provided by providers in engineering and technology colleges with projects drawn from industry partners and delivered to final year students to get them "industry ready" and pre-employment finishing schools in partnership with industry firms who participate in the student development process with guaranteed hiring preferences.

The models are many but all are aligned to a common theme – to bring new recruits to industry who are ready to go and do not need industry investment in retraining. At a time when the global economy is showing sure signs of slowing down, it will be prudent for all companies to adopt a "wait and watch" approach. This will mean planning for lower bench strength and smaller recruitment numbers and using trusted "source and train" partners to deliver talent on demand.

Enabling Talent in difficult times

We are living in difficult times with global economies on the precipice of recession. The Indian economic engine too is braking from its promised GDP growth of nine percent to under eight percent in the last quarter. While most economists still point to the country's robust fundamentals and the fact that a weakness in two quarters need not take away from the long term promise the country's economy holds, there is no doubt that employees in all sectors particularly those who are relatively new entrants will feel the tremors as corporate chiefs start to look at cost cutting aggressively and talent management takes a back seat.

Almost paradoxically, it is exactly in these times that a steady hand is needed at the tiller of a ship in stormy waters. Enabling and supporting human resources particularly the young folks who may have joined the organisation straight from technology or business schools and even those who may have switched companies or sectors in search of a better future is an imperative. Young people need assurance that their future is secure and that leadership is wise enough to ensure that there are always rich roles and opportunities available for meritorious talent in an organisation.

Having taken over as CEO of Zensar in 2001 at a similar time of panic in the IT Services industry with the Dotcom collapse creating a vacuum in the projects business and young people feeling that their careers were doomed in the aftermath of the World Trade Centre tragedy and the general downward drift in the economy, one experiences a sense of déjà vu. Then as is true now, there was no predictability about the future and contrary to today, when our organisation is on a strong growth path with unshakeable business fundamentals and a strong leadership and associate base,

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those were the days when we were a fledgling organisation with an attrition weakened leadership and a few hundred employees waiting for more work to come their way.

We embarked on a process, which was the subject of the case study discussion at the Harvard Business School. We formed a Vision Community of eager young and old employees charged with the goal of creating a new vision and agenda for the organisation. The enthusiasm with which this task was approached and the early steps towards building the truly connected organisation we have become today demonstrates beyond all doubt the power of collective thinking and shared vision creation at any time in the growth of an organisation. Today, we credit over seventy percent of our strategies for growth over the years to the Vision Community recommendations and the exercise has become an annual feature of our calendar.

There have been many more path breaking employee engagement initiatives that we have experimented with and continue to support today, which have processes and outcomes worthy of emulation in any organisation struggling to manage the aspirations and ambitions of the millennial generation. A culture which we call Five F – Fast, Focused, Flexible, Friendly and Fun, lies at the base of the collaborative environment which encourages people to give their best at all times. Each of these culture building Fs lend themselves to multiple initiatives, some predictable and many unique! Building exceptional career paths for fast track movers, providing coaching and mentoring to enable every young person t be the best they can be, having a very objective key result area and balanced business score card based performance managed system and creating an environment of transparency in appraisal and reward systems can all create the environment of "business as usual" that serves companies well in difficult business times.

Initiatives that are "out of the ordinary", which we have started and stuck with even through difficult patches include celebrating "arsonists" who can point to bureaucratic bottlenecks that need to be burnt to make way for simpler employee friendly policies and processes, a "Crazy Times call for Crazy Organisations" initiative that suggested radical new products and services and internal reward mechanisms specific to prevalent situations and a new "iZen" initiative we have launched across the organisation to build better leadership skills and action teams that make participative decision making a reality.

In global organisations, the need for better connectivity across geographies and cultures becomes even more critical since every nationality responds to economic difficulties in a unique manner and a "one size fits all" approach is bound to cause more pain. A strong Diversity & Inclusion Policy that enables committed cross-cultural groups to put every action and response under the microscope to test for appropriateness also gives the employee base in each geography the confidence that the leadership means well and while mistakes may be made, the intentions will always be genuine. Above all, the availability of leaders to extend a helping hand and maintain a friendly willingness to help groups or individuals through periods of stress is never forgotten by the organisation and creates the kind of loyalty that no amount of money given in happier times can ensure.

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Minimising Attrition – The Art Of Better Retention

Its is almost a cliché to say that the best way of ensuring successful operations in any organisation is not just recruiting the right people and giving them the skills to perform on the job, but also to ensure that avoidable attrition of talent is minimised. Attrition has proved to be the biggest bugbear in many firms in the IT and BPO sector with some BPO firms even reporting attrition in three digit percentages at some difficult times.

Retaining high performance team has now become an art practiced well and consistently in better organisations. With the old concepts of loyalty to a brand or to a firm becoming anachronistic particularly in the minds of the Generation "Y", attrition prevention has become a role that every line manager must play without easy delegation to the ever trying HR folks. In large and highly competitive organisations however, it is impossible to eliminate attrition particularly at junior levels and of average performers. One method that we have used effectively at Zensar is to identify ten to fifteen percent of the associate base as critical talent, with special care provided to draw up a comprehensive development action plan, engage in frequent career dialogues and ensure frequent leadership interactions for people in this category, while normal high quality talent management practices are available to the whole organisation. The results of this are demonstrated by the data. While our overall attrition has been many percentage points lower than peers in the industry, critical talent retention has always been in the high nineties and engagement scores in this group which includes all associates performing crucial customer facing roles has touched an all time high!

Another touch point particularly in young people leaving the organisation is the way an exit is handled. Many young associates leave for rather specious reasons and a good leaving experience has a high likelihood of what we have begun to call "boomerang recruitment, where a departing associate returns within six months of leaving the organisation. An overly bureaucratic exit process or worse still an acrimonious discussion with a superior at the time of exit does more harm that can be imagined and needs to be avoided at all costs.

Finally, there is much that can be said about the way millennials need to be handled, but one thing that is common for all is that integrity, dignity and a friendly collaborative approach to all matters pertaining to human resource management will always win. As somebody said to me recently, HR is too important to be left entirely to the HR department and it is this realisation that will ensure that line management works hand in hand with the HR folks to deliver sustainable human value to an organisation.

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YOUTH QUAKE: SHAPING THE GEN Y LEADERS FOR TOMORROW!

C MAHALINGAM

Abstract

Enough and more is researched and written about managing the millennial workforce. There is a bigger challenge awaiting HR is in harnessing the unique attributes of the Gen Y and shaping them to become leaders. And as Gen Y starts to don leadership roles, they will have to learn to manage the Gen X workforce that will still constitute a significant workforce. To my mind, making this happen is more a challenge for HR than for the Gen Y themselves. Are we prepared? What do we need to know and learn about the melting pot of generations at workforce? What is the transformation that HR profession and professionals need to go through in making the Gen Y leadership building happen?

About the Author

C. Mahalingam (Mali) is the Executive Vice President & Chief People Officer with Symphony Corporation. Prior to Symphony Services, Mali headed HR for IBM India, Hewlett-Packard India and for Royal Philips Software operations in India.

1.0 Introduction: I call this the ***"Youth-Quake"*** since I am of the view that this phenomenon is going to shake up the workforce all over the world sooner than later. And this was not my coinage, for this phrase came into vogue as far back as 1963 and was coined by *Vogue's* editor-in-chief, Diana Vreeland! (Source: Wikipedia). It was then associated with fashion and cultural movement dominated by youth in those days. I have now faithfully borrowed this to the movement of Gen Y assuming leadership roles in organisations. A lot has been written about the millennial workforce becoming a dominant population in today's offices, factories and other workplaces. In fact, Prof Joyce Russell of University of Maryland has estimated that the millennial workforce currently accounts for 25% of the global workforce and this will grow to over 50% by 2014! **(1)** And there are hundreds of books and millions of pages published on understanding, managing and engaging the millennial workforce. While this growing body of knowledge is helpful and useful, my focus in this article is notably different and in an area where there is not enough published literature available: *how do we build leadership competence and*

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capability in the millennial talent as they are seeking leadership roles increasingly in our organszations.

2.0 What is new about leadership as it applies to the Gen Y? Well, the truthful answer should be: *"do not know yet, but one thing is for sure that it is not going to be what it used to be!"* Gen Y employees are markedly a different breed from Gen X and Baby Boomers that constituted the majority workforce till recently. And when Gen Y comes to occupy leadership roles in organisations in the next several years, the workforce will still have significant number of Gen X-ers besides Gen Y themselves. True that the Gen Y folks are not the CEOs of the Fortune 500 or 100 companies yet, but they continue to be the dominant influencers and innovators already! However, let us not forget that a 25-year old is the most admired CEO today of the most searched and networked brand on the web! Gen Y leaders in the junior and middle management ranks is already the order of the day and therefore the focus on cultivating and expanding the leadership talent amongst them is a key current imperative

3.0 New world of work demands new leadership capability: The world of workforce in the next few decades is not going to resemble much of what we have so far seen in the last few decades. Sure, there will be some continuity, but that will be minimal in the larger scheme of the discontinuity our organisations will witness and experience. Traditional organisational structures and authority equations are already beginning to break. And such changes will only accelerate going forward. While Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg became exceptionally futuristic in designing and leveraging social technologies and products built upon such technologies, the future will witness many different and perhaps difficult-to-conceive implications that those of us without a surname Jobs and Zuckerberg ever dreamt of! And these changes will call for innovations in management paradigms of the type and magnitude that Dr. Gary Hamel foresees in his best-seller **(2).** This will call for a deeper understanding of the millennial mindset and values / ethos and a leadership that weaves these into the very fabric of the organisation. Therefore, welcome to the ***"millennial watershed"*** in management!

4.0 Management in the Millennial world: It would be interesting to see what many leading lights / experts on Gen Y have said about what the millennial leaders will look like**(3):**

- This group will be fine managers.... We may see more leaders who truly do care about others, thus invigorate their teams and provide cultures that are profitable not because they are forced to, but because they want to! (Bette Price)
- We will in fact treat our employees the way we expect to be treated. (David Mulllings)
- This generation will not put up with talk and no action! (Phil Clark)
- As managers, millennials strongly diffuse responsibility/accountability at individual levels in their organisations (DiomandeYantoulaye)
- They will work long and hard, provided they care! (August Ray)
- They will reward their subordinates for changing things rather than maintaining status quo! (Phil Dourado)

There are of course those who take a point of view that leadership by Gen Y will be no different from what it was with their predecessors! (Susan RoAne). As I mentioned earlier in this article, while it is

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difficult to predict what will be the dominant attributes of the millennial leaders, we can be reasonably sure that much of it will be a departure from the past! Sure enough, there will also be a significant difference between the many different millennial generation leaders themselves.

5.0 The millennial world that is unfolding itself: Research into the world of millennials has many things to report. Some of the commonly agreed themes are listed below. This will perhaps set the context for determining the leadership capability we will need going forward and therefore the focus of leadership development itself:

5.1 Shared leadership is more likely than a centralised power center/holder called a CEO. This could seem pretty far-fetched for many of us used to the hierarchical structures of the present and past.

5.2 Multi-tasking teams as revealed by the belief by 82% of the researched millennials who desired to have a staff that can do each other's job rather than being very specialised and independent

5.3 Consensus decision making as a pervasive style of management. Millennials seem uniformly impressed by the need to bring diverse thinkers to the table to reach a collaborative decision

5.4 Eagerness to welcome and embrace change as a way of life. In fact, change is what really grabs their attention and keeps them engaged.

5.5 Fun, friendly and challenging work environment as non-negotiable conditions for membership and contribution is another facet of the future world of work for millennials.

5.6 A culture that is driven by continuous innovation is key. Much as the past generation was attracted by fashion and celebrity, the millennial generation is attracted by innovation and technology

5.7 Idea powered culture and structure! With millennials, age is important only if you are cheese or wine! Millennials are not carried away by "been there, done that before" as much as by those that bring brilliant ideas to the table.

5.8 Flipping the equation between technology and humanity! While there will be no technology without humanity, Gen Y flips this equation and looks to technology to actually make the lives more human!

5.9 High regard for quality. Millennials reported that they enjoyed the stylish and innovative products from Apple, Sony and Nike because they also had exceptional quality! When it comes to Gen Y, quality wins landslide!

5.10 Clear appreciation that longevity creates value! While Gen Y is known to move from gizmos to gizmos to keep up with fashion and features, they see an enormous value that the lasting nature of the products creates.

The above list could be longer perhaps. But suffice to say that the world of the millennial is imaginably (or unimaginably?!) different! It belies the various myths and misunderstandings that surround our understanding of the Gen Y.

6.0 Leadership Brand is unique to the business landscape: Leadership capability, therefore, needs to reflect the demands of the workplace and millennial leaders need to be groomed to become brand ambassadors of the attributes that pretty much characterise the workplace of the future. Millennial talent will have lesser challenge acquiring, strengthening and delivering these attributes and capabilities as many of them come naturally to them, belonging as they do to the same

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generation! However, a heightened sense of awareness should be kept in mind in planning their development for leadership roles. Key competencies and attributes that would make the millennials good leaders would be as follows:

6.1 Ability to manage paradoxes: There are many reasons why this competence is critical. Millennial leaders will typically need what Dr. Roger Martin from Rotman School of Management calls as "opposable minds." The either- or days of management are over. Future leaders need to be comfortable with paradoxes that co-exist and actually make the best of such a situation

6.2 Fusion of technology and management: Managers of the past almost were ones who graduated out of technology into anything but technology! Millennial leaders will choose to and need to be a blend of both technology and management experts

6.3 Consensus management with speed: Millennial leaders have a preference for consensus management, but at the same time are restless with delays and drags. Speed is key and therefore they need to master the ability to building consensus and reaching a decision speedily. Sounds like an oxymoron, right? But with millennials, this is an obsession and a practical one at that!

6.4 Personal credibility & Trust: Since the workplace culture would be one of extraordinary transparency, trust and teamwork, millennial leaders need to embrace a lot of trust worthiness and credibility. It is this credibility that will attract, retain and engage the talent that millennial leaders will get to manage.

6.5 Ability to move from ideas to execution. Workplace of the future will be full of ideas and creativity. Millennial leaders who will succeed will be those that have the skill to sieve out the cheese from the chalk and nuggets from the noise! While there is some truth in the saying "ideas move mountains", there is even more truth in the assertion that "ideas do not move mountains, but bulldozers do and ideas help find where the bulldozers are!"

6.6 Fierce resolve and personal humility: Yes you got it, that is what "Level Five" leaders are made of, according to Jim Collins! Future leaders will have a strong focus on organisational success, but at a personal level, they are easy to relate to and work with. Egos need to be strong, rather than big for the leaders of the future.

6.7 Dealing with ambiguity: This is perhaps an all season competency for leaders of all generations, but even more importantly for those who have the opportunity to lead the millennial generation of the future. The ups and down of the business cycles are likely to be even more frequent and more virulent. Dealing with exceptional amount of ambiguity will mark those who succeed from those who do not.

6.8 Ability to continuously learn, unlearn and relearn: The half-life of knowledge will become even shorter going forward. Leaders of the future remain good students forever and unlearn what has lost relevance and relearn what is relevant. It is not only learning the technology, but unlearning even the irrelevant management paradigms will become even more critical. Management practices that millennial generation was perhaps subjected to will need to be unlearnt and newer ways of managing the workforce will have to be learnt on the fly. It is going to be as challenging and exciting as 'mid-air fuelling'.

6.9 Leading in a hierarchy-less organization: Managing an organisation without a hierarchy is not necessarily the

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same as presiding over anarchy! On the other hand, ensuring that everyone feels like an owner and therefore behaves with a personal code of conduct will become a key capability that millennial leaders need to ensure.

6.10 Accordion management: This is a competence that will be required in a larger measure for the millennial leaders. Accordion as a music instrument is played by expanding and contracting. Future workforce will be something that will expand and contract thanks to business landscape moving like a swamp. Ability to navigate through this swamp would be a key competence

7.0 Best Practices in vogue today:

7.1 Best Buy started to practice successfully what is now widely known as "Result-Oriented Work Environment" or ROWE for short. Instead of managing the butt-on-the-seat time, millennial workforce prefers productivity and contribution being measured and rewarded.

7.2 IBM is long known for practicing what is now known as "blended learning" methodology that best suits the millennial leadership training. This goes beyond class room learning to leveraging technology extensively and collaborative learning through shared learning portals

7.3 Google is a great example of building a culture of innovation and collaboration, so very dear to the millennial workforce. They have "idea listserv" where anyone can suggest or comment on ideas

7.4 Semco corporation is a standing and successful example of bringing democracy to workplace. Millennial leaders and workers thrive in such an environment

7.5 W L Gore Associates operates successfully where there is no hierarchy, but everyone takes accountability for their roles and deliverables

8.0 Approaches to building millennial leadership: The above list of competencies is only illustrative and not exhaustive. Also, as we move into the future, these competencies have to be revalidated for their relevance. Now the question is what kind of leadership development efforts would bring the most effective results. I was fascinated by the great work done for the millennial generation by the founder(s) of Khan Academy! Please take a look at their site: www.khanacademy.org. Khan academy is doing mind-boggling work in the area of teaching different subjects to the kids and students of the current generation. They have over 2500 video clips on many different subjects. Khan Academy has so far delivered over 7.6 million lessons on the net and is very popular with the millennial generation. As we all know, millennial generation is net savvy, gizmos crazy and enjoy "you-tubing" and "twitting" and interacting via 'facebook'. And expecting them to sit through boring class room lectures is a no, no. Same holds good when it comes to training for leadership. We need a "khan academy-type" learning approach for building millennial leaders. Next thing that works is a powerful mentoring and coaching system. Millennial workforce is quite open to being coached and mentored. The caliber of the mentor and coach, of course, is very critical. Traditional class-room and e-learning approaches will terribly fall short of expectations and will be shunned by the leadership talent waiting to be honed!

9.0 Conclusion: In a nutshell, I have focused on some of the key imperatives of developing millennial leaders in the above columns. They include:

9.1 Millennial generation will soon constitute a significant percentage of the workforce and many of them will even seek to be leaders

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9.2 It is in our organisational interest to build the required leadership attributes and competencies in the future leaders of our organisations

9.3 Millennial leaders are dramatically different from the earlier generation of leaders since they will have to manage a different world of work.

9.4 Leadership competencies required to be honed should reflect the work place dominated by millennials although there will also be Gen X in decent numbers in the workforce

9.5 Millennial leaders will prefer a learning approach akin to the spectacular work done by the Khan Academy. Class-room and even web-based approaches to learning will fall short

9.6 Coaching and mentoring will become a very significant intervention for grooming the millennial leaders.

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BUILDING GEN Y — FRIENDLY WORK PLACES : MAKE MY TRIP EXPERIENCE

ROHIT HASTEER

Abstract

What would be more exciting for a fresher straight out of college than to join an organization, which follows no dress code, has a TT — foosball table to liven up a busy working day or where fun is a core organization value?

Make My Trip, an entrepreneurial venture with a high percentage of Gen Y workforces discusses these trends in this article. Apart from the fun & energizing initiatives to engage with the younger generation, the article also focuses on Learning & Career aspirations of the younger generation. The company provides managerial inputs to young managers & rewards good performers with high levels of independent responsibility at a young age to build future entrepreneurs.

About the Author

Rohit Hasteer is the Vice President of the Human Resources & Soft Skills Training teams of MakeMyTrip. He has over 12 years of work experience and has previously worked in companies like Samsung, CitiFinancial and Aviva Life Insurance.

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Employees of the past worked in one organization for many years - not because they did could not find a better workplace but because they never felt the need to look out and explore opportunities beyond their current organization. They had an innate connect with their organizations and there was not much that the organization had to do to make them stay. But things have changed with the entry of Generation Y. Their needs and demands are different. The Generation Y demands not just a high paying job but look at total rewards, they do not want just promotions but opportunities for career progression and a career path, not just a brand name but a great place to work and a more open and fair culture. They need an environment which recognizes their good work, fosters innovation and promotes ideas to improve work & bringing about a revolution. The impetus for this is their inner drive to excel and be a step ahead of their peers. This generation has been feeding on the principles of equality and the power of merit to get recognized and rewarded accordingly. It is important to ensure that we match their expectations and offer them a conducive and friendly work place

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Culture matters

We need to understand the DNA of this Generation Y to be able to offer them what they want. An organization that can offer them a great culture coupled with learning & growth opportunities is the ideal bet for them. The ideal culture should strongly believe in the open door policy and transparency much more than just heavy pay packets and comfortable & plush offices. Such culture should offer equal opportunities and even more than equality, give opportunities to go accelerate and go beyond their peers and even seniors, by their sheer hard work and zest. Employees at such workplaces should be valued basis their contribution towards the organization and not by their designations. Learning needs to be encourages and thus a culture of sharing learning needs to be promoted. To give an example, at MakeMyTrip, our technology team comes together every once in a while to share and exchange new technologies that they have learnt or used which may be helpful for others. Besides the conventional modes of communication, we also have some unique initiatives like the MMT Blog, the My Ideas portal and the BubbleBee group which gives employees an opportunity to voice their opinion and share their suggestions and thoughts with the entire employee base. Open and honest communication is what touches the Generation Y most.

Doing things the fun way

What would be more exciting for someone fresh out of college to join an organization which follows no dress code, where they have a TT and a foosball table to relax them in the middle of a tiring day, where fun@work is not just a practice but a value each employee lives by. Some of the new entrepreneurial ventures in India have a high percentage of Generation Y with majority of its workforce in the age bracket of 22-30 years. Apart from offering them good pay packets, the organization ensures that a balance between work and personal life is maintained. A congenial work environment is maintained by holding regular fun activities like Quizzes, team lunches, celebration of festivals etc. One doesn't need to have huge budgets for the same, the spirit for Fun@work is important to keep the momentum going and improvising each time. Being awarded among the Top 3 Best Places to Work, for two consecutive years, is only a testimony of what employees at MakeMyTrip feel about the culture and people practices at MakeMyTrip. The listing of MakeMyTrip at NASDAQ was celebrated with much fanfare with a theme party - "Chalo Amreekaa". MakeMyTrip celebrated its recognition as a great place to work with equal enthusiasm making sure that all trippers from every branch in India were included. Such measures become important in the long run to establish a strong internal connect and attachment of the employees with the organization. It's not just about having fun but also helps promote teamwork and bonding among the employees, MakeMyTrip ensures that all organizational achievements are celebrated and the fruits of success are shared with all equally.

Plethora of options and opportunities

Keeping the employees motivated and inspired had always been challenging and even more when the target group is Generation Y. This dynamic group is forever looking for better work opportunities and learning avenues. The phenomenon of spending a lifetime in an organization is a passé nowadays. People are no longer hesitant to move out of their current roles and experiment new things. The extensive reach of the internet has led to information being available within minutes. A host of new career options are coming up every day which break the

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monotony of a regular office job and provide the excitement of pursuing one's passions. It therefore becomes essential to offer them diverse career opportunities which curb their hunger for novelty. The want to utilize their education and intellect in doing tasks that challenge them and therefore accomplishment of such tasks gives them that inner satisfaction. The generation Y does not like themselves to be evaluated by the number of years of experience they have on their resume but the amount of good work and major contributions they have made to the organizations they have been associated with.

Actions speak louder than words

Another engaging factor that keeps the Generation Y going is the trust that their organization places in them, which elicits high level of accountability and ownership from them. MakeMyTrip does just this and therefore has been a successful enterprise that proudly admits that they build future entrepreneurs. I am not sure how many companies in India or rather globally have young managers between the age of 25-28 handling key LOB's and functions worth crores of revenues. MakeMyTrip believes that it is what it is due to its people and also believes in giving it back to the employees hence it has such a unique reward scheme where it covers close to 70% of its workforce under an aggressive 'Reserved Stock Unit Plan.'

It's all about saying "Well Done"

A pat on the back and constant feedback is a necessity for today's generation. They do not want to wait for the year end appraisal and the promotion letter to hear that they did a fine job. Hence, the need to build a strong reward and recognition is there to build a healthy and competitive workforce. These passionate young people get motivated by appreciation amongst an audience, by bigger and wider set of responsibilities, more challenging tasks to satisfy their hunger to do something more and a clear cut path to tread upon to reach their goal. Expression can be in any form but appreciation must come at appropriate times.

Let's do it "Our" Way

The earlier generations of employees were evaluated by the organization as being fit for the company or not. Nowadays a new trend has emerged with the Gen Y employees. They look at their fit with the organization and take the decision to stay or leave accordingly. A very important aspect in retention of such aspirational people is autonomy and freedom given to them to work in their own way. The freedom to start any new project, being accountable for its execution and follow through gives a lot of empowerment to employees. The freedom to make mistakes without the fear of being reprimanded encourages experimentation and thus helps innovate. Another aspect of retention is flexibility at work. Gen Y believes in living life to the fullest. They not only want to work but also follow their heart and do things that give them peace and happiness. The need to socialize and explore new experiences is very high in them. They need to have a balance between their work life and private life as well. The concept of flexible work arrangements is very attractive to them. All in all, generation Y wants to be their own boss, be it in deciding their office schedule, projects they chose, the way they work and what they derive out of it.

Investing in Talent

As times are emerging, the HR practitioners have realized that it's not just about retaining people, but it's essential to develop them as well. With the increasing competition among, organizations have to

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reciprocate to the changes in the market, technology, products and regulations and realize the true potential of their employees. At Make My Trip we conduct special workshops to orient its new people managers towards the managerial roles and develop behaviors to enable them to perform with excellence. Apart from this, regular domain specific workshops are also conducted to equip the managers with the necessary know how to deliver their mandates well beyond the designated ones. To keep up with the academic aspirations of Gen Y employees, MakeMyTrip has an 'Enhancing Education policy' to enable employees to learn and enhance their educational qualifications. In addition to this we have a 'Study Tour' policy also known as FAM or Familiarisation trips which are a unique way of rewarding the top performers by sending them to visit the destinations where they are expected to drive the Sales for that destination. The traveling members in their respective regions are accountable for performance on that particular destination. We have conducted Study tours to locations like Europe, South East Asia, etc.

On a Final Note

The entry of Gen Y into the workforce has brought a paradigm shift in the thinking of employers .It has brought about positive change in the older set of employees who want to keep pace with the newer ones.

The loyalty and contribution of an employee is not judged anymore by the number of years they stay in an organization but by their efforts and the direction in which they take their organizations. At a workplace that is an amalgamation of older generation and Generation Y. The changing attitudes and trends have seen the earlier generations become more like the Gen Y in their working styles. Taking insights from the generation Y and their needs, the organizations can bring about healthy change in its processes and functioning.

The traditional ways are out. Now its Gen Y who will lead the way.

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GETTING HR READY FOR GEN Y — KEY TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

JUDHAJIT DAS

Abstract

Have you ever felt that today's MBA expects roles that are two levels higher than the capabilities she/he brings in? Do you think that we have too many qualified but unemployable youngsters? Do you worry that too many 'green horns' are already big time leaders — without matching experience? Read on. The author in this article explains the many challenges we have as many from Gen Y are getting into the workforce. The author argues that HR has to move from Recruitment to resource planning to bridge the skills gaps, Hr manager have to be true employee advocates to 'curb the excesses' of young and inexperienced managers and help the 'pampered' and 'protected' youngsters from small well knit families to face the stresses of work life.

About the Author

Judhajit Das Judhajit Das works with ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, India's largest private sector life insurance company. He started his career with the RPG Group and worked in Group HR and later as Head of HR at Saregama Ltd., GE Capital and ICICI Prudential Life.

Judhajit graduated in Economics from Jadavpur University, Kolkata and is a post graduate in PM&IR from XLRI, Jamshedpur.

I. Employability

One of the key issues of workforce productivity is the issue of employability. In my mind, this problem has two dimensions. One is the problem of access, which needs to be solved through significantly higher investments in the social and education infrastructure. However, the more complex issue is perhaps the rigour in standards at all levels of the education system. For e.g. there are large number of young graduates who have undergone a post-graduate management qualification with the expectation of being hired for frontline managerial jobs with commensurate levels of compensation. However, most organisations in the financial services sector do not find many of these MBA's suitable for jobs other than for customer facing roles in frontline sales and distribution or in customer service and operations. This is because many of the young MBA's do not bring to the table the level of cognitive reasoning and analytical problem solving skills that one would expect from a person with a post-graduate management qualification. This creates a problem of aspiration mismatch and we see

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this phenomenon pervading across all levels of our education system.

The implication of this is that we have many young men and women aspiring for roles one to two levels above their level of capability, and consequently, left feeling frustrated as organisations find them unemployable for the positions they seek. This is especially true at entry level. Adding to the problem is the omnibus undergraduate education system that produces a large number of graduates without any industry specific skills and who are largely unfit for any employment for the jobs they aspire for in terms of their cognitive reasoning skills, business communication skills, etc. Ideally, many of them should have pursued vocational skills to make themselves employable, but the absence of a culture that encourages vocational skills, and instead promotes pursuit of undergraduate studies creates a twin problem of employability and mismatch in expectations.

Employability is a larger social challenge that will need the co-ordinated intervention of many actors starting from the primary school level. While the corporate sector cannot be expected to solve the challenge of employability, it will need to plan ahead to ensure that it's growth and expansion is unhindered despite this constraint. Hence, we will see the role of HR shifting from a recruitment function to resource planning - working with the business to assess business needs and planning ahead for mobilising resources at optimal costs. This entails innovating in skill building and creating a talent supply chain for entry level positions, supervisory positions and positions requiring specific domain expertise. Human capital is the lifeblood of a services business and the cost and quality of human capital is a key competitive differentiator. HR will hence, be called upon to support the CEO in driving productivity and effective utilisation of human capital, just as a CFO is expected to support the CEO in driving effective allocation and utilisation of financial capital to maximise returns and value creation.

II. Middle management depth

A related implication is the increasingly young profile of the workforce at the middle management level with consequent implications for organisation productivity and success. Today, we have people in their early thirties with only a few years of experience assuming leadership roles, due to the twin factors of rapid business growth and the young demographics of the country. This is an enormous challenge because leadership is learnt through practice over time - it really cannot be taught or acquired through study.

The HR function will hence, need to put in place a structured framework for early identification of leadership talent. There needs to be investment in leadership development given the age profile of the talent pool and the difficult challenge of accelerating the maturity curve of young professionals who would have otherwise developed through experience over time. The HR function will need to assist the Gen Y leaders along their career paths to develop their capacity for judgment while making decisions. Organisations will need to also move away from venerating age and experience and believing in the power of the youth to make a difference.

III. Redefinition of the employment contract

Apart from the phenomenon of job inflation, the 'war for talent' also translates into higher attrition and wage inflation. This has led to the breakdown of the 'cradle to grave' employment contract and hence, it has become that much harder for organisations to justify their investment in

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building and nurturing young talent as they are not assured of their long term continuance in the organisation. In financial services organisations, the bulk of job creation happens in frontline sales and customer service. Whilst there is a knowledge component to these jobs, the skill maturation happens through practice over time. Compounding the problem is the issue of market volatility and profitability pressures. Hence, many organisations are under pressure to reduce the necessary time and performance support to their people to learn and perform on the job, as investment in development stares at them as a visible cost head. Hence, we often see the phenomenon of frontline managers adopting policies, which puts relentless pressure on performance and stringent action against those not meeting the performance targets. This has resulted in a culture of 'fail the failure fast' at the frontline level and has led to huge waste and employee turnover. Adding fuel to the problem is the corrosion of the employer brand for frontline sales and distribution careers and we do not find young people being attracted to pursue sales & distribution careers despite the remuneration being offered.

It is hence imperative that the HR function plays its role as an effective umpire and employee advocate. HR will need to ensure that managerial excesses are curbed and employees' rights are not compromised. The twin impact of high attrition and wage inflation has impacted organisations where it hurts most, namely productivity and profitability. This will demand a multi pronged set of initiatives to hire right, on board right, train right and create the right performance culture. Every organisation will need to balance the needs of all its stakeholders for creating long term sustainable value and helping employees succeed and this is key to enhancing business productivity and customer satisfaction. HR will need to take a lead role in building an enabling work culture and ensure that employees are also fairly treated.

IV. Workforce diversity

The diversity of the workforce has broadened with the emergence of a multi-generational workforce with different levels of experience, capability and attitudes and also, in terms of their gender and socio-economic background. Today, organisations need to embrace diversity to compete effectively in the 'war for talent' and hence, workplaces will no longer be as homogenous as was in the past. We are seeing the trend of increasing participation of women in the workforce and also, men and women from Tier II and Tier III towns and cities.

Organisations will need to think through their existing policies and practices to ensure they are not only positioned as a preferred employer for qualified and talented professionals of both genders, but are also able to successfully attract and retain young professionals regardless of their place of origin and socio- economic class. This will involve delivering an employment proposition that strikes the right balance between meeting the diverse life stage needs of the workforce and workforce perceptions of fairness and meritocracy. Additionally, organisations will need to continually examine if they are positioned as a preferred employer for young professionals who may have different expectations from their work and life relative to their more senior colleagues.

V. Emerging values, beliefs and attitudes

The digital age has led to the proliferation of new communication technologies and social media. This has spawned an entirely new way of communicating over text messages, chat, Facebook etc. The

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increasing complexity of business - geographical and demographic diversity, technological developments, changing consumer expectations and regulatory compliance - will make demands upon organisations to encourage greater participation of the workforce in solving organisational problems and facilitating upward and lateral flow of ideas. Leadership in the organisational context will increasingly get driven by expertise and knowledge and not just by virtue of one's position or role. Also, the ability to connect with the workforce will become increasingly important as organisations seek out 'volunteers' and not mere employees. Organisations will need to leverage this trend by replicating some of the new communication technology at the workplace to support collaboration, communication and dissemination of ideas. The smart use of communication technology will not only make organizations appealing to Gen Y, but may also be suitably leveraged as a business productivity tool.

The career options for the educated professional have multiplied manifold not just in terms of job opportunities within their sector or profession, but also in terms of options of alternate careers. Additionally, the relative abundance of jobs and growth in year on year compensation has created a sense of economic security that was hitherto, unimaginable. We are already witnessing the phenomenon of many professionals giving up their existing careers to pursue alternate careers as entrepreneurs or pursuing their passion in academics, independent consulting, social work or social entrepreneurship. This search for personal meaning in work means that career choices will be driven by personal motivation and values rather than economic necessity. The selection processes will need to be attuned to examining 'motivation fit' and 'culture fit', as these will be key determinant of employee success and retention. The importance of crafting and delivering a cogent employee value proposition will become more paramount for attracting and retaining employees and retention based compensation strategies will simply not work beyond a point.

At the same time, the phenomenon of many jobs chasing the same person has given rise to a false sense of entitlement and overconfidence in one's skills and capabilities. Additionally, the proliferation of consumer credit and sharp growth in year on year compensation has led to emergence of a culture of instant gratification. However, both these trends have been tempered in the wake of the financial crisis and the relative slowdown in growth. It is likely that the scars of the 2008 crisis shall result in greater moderation of the consumption drive and the belief in one's infallibility.

Many in the Gen Y population have also been raised in nuclear families or as single children. Hence, the extent of attention accorded to them, both emotionally and materially, has been significantly higher as compared to the previous generation. This has also resulted in many young professionals growing up in a protected environment and being hyper sensitive to any criticism at the workplace relative to the previous generation. At the same time, the break down of the joint family system and increasing number of working parents has also resulted in many young professionals growing up without adequate emotional sustenance, thus, often leading to alienation, inadequate emotional growth with consequent implications for interpersonal relationships. The stress of modern urban life and the absence of a family support structure are also taking its toll on the physical and mental health of the workforce.

HR will need to respond to these challenges by developing early warning systems to identify stress issues of its employees.

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Tracking productivity parameters and absenteeism due to ill health are likely to emerge as key lead indicators of employee stress levels. The phenomenon of the young being led by the young means that managers will not be able to fulfill their traditional roles of providing performance support. The breakdown of family structures means the absence of elders to offer life coaching to young professionals. We are already witnessing the emergence of Employee Assist Programs to provide employees with counseling services to help manage their stress and also, personal and work related problems. HR will need to think through innovative strategies for offering performance support in the form of coaching, counseling and mentoring support and this trend is only likely to intensify.

Conclusion

The growth of the Indian economy is expected to continue over the next two decades. This will be marked by rising affluence and higher disposable income,which will lead to a shift in the attitudes of the workforce towards employment and careers. At the same time, we need to see directed investment in improving the social and development infrastructure so that the bulk of the Indian population can reap the benefit of the enhanced prosperity. This will have huge implications whether the 'demographic dividend' turns out to be a blessing or a curse.

The pace of change is also likely to become faster with rapid shifts in the competitive landscape and development of new technologies. Gen Y will be joining the Indian workforce at a time when we are likely to see emergence of more and more opportunities. Gen Y are the children of a new India post economic liberalisation and are perhaps likely to be more socially aware and will make choices that drive inclusive, sustainable growth and not just shareholder value maximisation. The onus will be on HR professionals and the leadership team to think differently and develop innovative solutions that create an eco system that unleashes the creative potential of team members while striking a balance between organisational goals and employee expectations and aspirations.

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UNDERSTANDING MULTIGENERATIONS IN THE WORKFORCE IN INDIA

VASANTHI SRINIVASAN, DEDEEPYA AJITH JOHN and MARIA CHRISTINE NIRMALA

Abstract

Out of the 28 states, some Indian states are worse than sub Sahara Africa, while some others are even better than China, this is caused due to the skewed economic development of states. There are also regional similarities and differences in people's beliefs and practices. India is one of the most complex countries & words like heterogeneous & plural do not even begin to convey the extent of India's diversity.

This conceptual paper engages in a critical reflection the manner in which generations are understood within organizations in India. The paper argues for an alternate conceptualization of generations in the Indian context and the manner in which HR professionals need to critically evaluate the dominant generational identities within their organizations. As HR professionals the challenge lies in effectively harnessing the multi-generational differences in a productive and effective manner which serves the interest of the organization & the individual.

About the Authors

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Introduction:

In October 2009, when Vikram, CEO of a manufacturing company addressed the open house session, he was astonished at the number of questions that were raised on the dress code of the organisation. For over two decades, the organisation had a formal attire dress code, which was never questioned. Off late, there have been repeated requests to change the policy. As the percentage of campus recruits increased over the years, the demand for "business casual" attire or Friday casual attire was getting quite pronounced. A number of senior managers were also in favour of this demand, as long as it did not alter the professional image of the organisation. In 2011, the organisation introduced the "business casual attire" for all, with a caveat that client facing roles would require to be in formal attire whenever they had to attend client meetings.

The Tata Nano story is well known. Reproduced below is an excerpt from the website of the company[39], "Over the months, the 120 member manufacturing team was built through a systematic process, through interviews and evaluations. People were taken from within Tata Motors, as well as from outside, graduate engineer trainees from IIT Kharagpur and Jadavpur University. "There was a mix of experience and youthfulness" says Ajay Tewari, Assistant General Manager, HR, Small Car project. "Though the members were from diverse areas, the team worked well together because the overriding objective was the focus for everyone. There was a huge amount of transparency as the role of each person was clearly defined. The diversity in the team helped in generating unique and fresh ideas."

"Ten years ago, as the head of the department in a large public sector company, my job was primarily to oversee the operations physically. Today with e-procurement, ERP and the intent to build a paperless office, I find that there is a technology related Tsunami within the organisation. The leaders who understand business well are struggling with technology; those who understand technology suddenly find the need to understand the domain of business. We are now seeing for the first time, opportunities for the technologically literate youngsters to teach the older generation; if people with experience in the organisation need to lead and gain respect from their people, they need to understand and use technology effectively. This is about a technology generation - that of technology literates, neo-literates and the illiterates" said the CEO of a large public sector.

The three vignettes illustrate different scenarios, which are commonly attributed to "multi generational diversity". While the subject of generations is common in every day conversations, generations as a concept in India have been subject to little academic scrutiny. In most cases, the categorisation of generations are those that have been arrived at based on defining events like the World War II; Civil Right movement, etc, which have had a significant bearing from the western context, but has little relevance to the Indian scenario. It is against this background that this paper attempts to engage in a critical reflection the manner in which generations are understood within organisations in India. This conceptual paper is being developed as a part of an ongoing research on "Multiple Generations in the workforce in India" done in collaboration between the first author and the Society for Human Resource Management, India. The paper is divided into three parts - it begins with a brief overview of generations and generational differences at workplace in the global context; the second section argues for an alternate conceptualisation of generations in the Indian context; and in the final section the authors conclude

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with the manner in which HR professionals need to critically evaluate the dominant generational identities within their organisations.

Defining Generations

"Generations" as a construct is elusive and multiple attempts have been made by scholars in various disciplines to unbundle this phenomena16. From a historical context, scholars Strauss and Howe (1991)[33] specifically examine the Anglo-American history by dividing it into saecula (90 years), or seasonal cycles of history, which is further divided into four "Turnings" (22 years long). It is proposed that children raised during a particular Turning share similar historical and cultural experiences, resulting in distinct generational types.

In sociological theory, Mannheim (1952)[22] defined a generation as a group of people, "who share a common habitus, nexus and culture, a collective memory that serves to integrate" and has two important elements to it; common location in historical time and a distinct consciousness of that historical position, shaped by the events and experiences of that time[14].

Scholars in the field of marketing, have broadly followed the sociological definition proposed by Mannheim (1952)[22] and have used the concept of generations to characterise consumers for the purpose of segmentation.

The practitioner definition of a generation is, "an identifiable group that shares birth years, age, location and significant life events at critical developmental stages"[20]. Generational cohorts develop similarities in their attitudes and beliefs based on shared life experiences, hence have identifiable characteristics on which they differ.

What is common across the various definitions described above is an attempt to distinguish a group of people in a time frame into distinct subgroups based on certain significant external events/forces. To date most research in this field has been conducted in the US, UK and Canada, which have been impacted by the same historical events and experiences. These studies have used the widely accepted categorisation of generations into four groups of Veterans, Baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y [3,4,9,15,19,24,25,27,32,35,36]. Though there are differences on the age ranges of the generations and their characteristics , the common theme through the studies is that, the prominent socio-cultural and historical events have a significant impact on the attitudes and personalities of individuals that would lead to common ways of thinking and approach to life. It is also assumed that these commonalities within generations would include common work values and thereby result in differences in work values between generations.

There is a growing body of knowledge, which suggests that generational differences in work values influence the manner in which collaboration, sharing and engagement occur in organisations. Inter-generational differences are found to impact all aspects of people management: recruitment[8], training and development[5,34], career development[2,23], rewards and working arrangements[7,11] and management style[21,34]; as well as having the potential to cause serious conflict within the workplace[19]. It is proved that, while the generational differences exist across the world, defining generations remains specific to a given society, as the differences in any society are shaped by political, socio-economic and cultural events.

Understanding the Indian context

India is one of the most complex countries to understand and make sense of since words like heterogeneous and plural do not even begin to convey the extent of India's diversity. In many ways, business and management culture in India has

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always been a reflection of the complexity and diversity that characterises the country as a whole. After liberalisation in 1991, the different states in India have shown economic development at a varying pace. As Dreze & Sen 6 mention, out of the twenty-eight states, some Indian states are worse than sub Saharan Africa, while others are better than China. Rural and urban India is at different stages of evolutions; even within the rural India, often within the same state, there are oases of development poised to leapfrog and become more developed than urban India[25].

According to Census data[37], the population of India has increased from 238.4 million in 1901 to 1210 million in 2011. It is estimated that by 2020, 50% of the Indian population will be below 25 years of age[38] and that the talent pools of younger people, under age 30, will have a growth percentage of 5.6. Yet the talent pool is not a homogeneous one given the differences in the context of skewed economic development in India.

Various authors have attempted to contextualise the Indian generations broadly based on the generations as defined in the global literature. Table 1, illustrates the same [6, 10,13,26,28:]

From the Table it is seen that while the studies have attempted to classify generations in India, none of them have attempted to identify the regional variations in the values. Generations are socially embedded in the context of the events that happen nationally. The process of liberalising of the economy in India, since 1990's is still incomplete. In the last decade, India has emerged as a significant player in the international markets. The corporate sector in India is witnessing unprecedented changes. The emergence of significant Multinational players in the market has resulted in a number of global management practices being adopted by local firms too. Along with this, the exponential growth of IT has meant significant changes in the manner in which organisations are managed. Yet, agriculture continues to remain a significant contributor to the GDP of the country. The co-existence of three economies, the agricultural, the manufacturing and the knowledge/ services economy in significant proportions creates a unique social context in newly emerging markets like India.

A number of scholars have also recognised differences in work values and motivations across different regions in India[17,18,30]. In a study done by Sinha et al, 2004[31], it was found that there were regional similarities and differences in people's beliefs and practices. 753 students from seven cities reported on their perception of what others believed and the extent to which they attached importance to their own /others opinions, desires and interests. Five values emerged as contrasted to the western literature - embeddedness in one's in-group, harmony and tolerance, duty in contrast to hedonism, preferences for personalised relationships and arranging persons, objects, ideas and relationships hierarchically. Three distinct clusters emerged out of the seven cities. Within cluster, differences were small or non-existent, but across cluster, differences were significant. In particular, the values associated with work regarding taking time off from work to visit ailing relatives, entertaining friends in the workplace and direct reportees, maintaining highly personalised relationships with their bosses differed significantly across the clusters. The common elements across the clusters were familial relationships, preference for hierarchy and maintenance of personalised relationships. All the three have implications at the workplace[31].

As HR professionals, the challenge lies in effectively harnessing the multi generational differences in a productive and effective manner, which serves the interest of the individual, collective and the

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TABLE 1

Categories	Traditionalists	Conservatives, Traditional gen, Midnight's children	Socialists, Integrators, Non – Traditional gen, Mid – way gen	Gen Y, Y2K, Liberalisation gen
Birth Years	1922/40 – 46/50	1943/46/47/48 – 60/64/68/69/70	1960/61/65/69/ 70/75 – 1979/ 80/84	1980 -1995
Defining events	British rule, food crisis, freedom struggle, Indo – Pak war of 1947	Post-independence, Shift to socialist economic model, nationalisation of industries, social reforms, political factions, Sino- Indian war, Indo- Pakistan war, changes in rupee value, Indian emergency, and famines	Indira Gandhi's assassination, reduction of stringent business regulations, expansion of telecommunication, software and IT sector, ,emigration of IIT graduates	Rao's economic liberalisation, reformed policies and growth, educational powerhouse, S&T development, communal violence, respected source of IT talent, listing of Indian companies in Forbes Global
Socio – cultural scenario	Large joint families, caste system, education limited to high caste boys, women meant to take care of families, child marriages	Large families, rigid caste system, Career options influenced by family and culture	Move from economic and physical security towards self – expression and quality of life, middle class dominating the workforce, inter community marriages, migration from rural to urban India, Westernisation	Large no. of middle class, high influence of western culture, disjoint and small families, Equal education and rights for all
Chara-cteristics	Frustration, authority, hardship, social order and caste system, loyal to family and community	Pro-democracy, hardship, anxiety, fear, lack of trust and hierarchy, Socialist, shy, obedient, idealistic, national pride, stressing social conformity, technophobic, avid savers	Hardship, self -sufficient, believed in hierarchy and a socialist economy, Less conservative, ambition of becoming rich, government jobs no longer attractive, importance on status and envy.	Ambitious, emphasis on financial reward, entrepreneurial, technology savvy, work life balance, need for material success and control, achievement and recognition.

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organisations. To do this meaningfully, an understanding of the generational identities within the organisation is valuable. Generational identity is a multifaceted construct that is broadly defined as "an individual's knowledge that he or she belongs to a generational group/ role, together with some emotional and value significance to him or her of this group/role membership"[16]. There could be three broad generational identities that can exist - cohort based identity, age based identity and an incumbency based identity. The cohort based identity is visible in organisations since the period of organisational entry, leads to a common set of experiences and outcomes for individuals who belong to a cohort. Age based generational identity arises out of different cohorts entering organisations in succession and therefore there is a senior age group which exists in the organisation as a junior cohort arrives and these groups have experiences in the collective which could be different based on the different organisational contexts (a new plant or a business starting with a set of new recruits, who would be the veteran generation and who in turn induct and socialise the entry of successors). The incumbency identity arises out of the perspective of roles in a social context. Every role in an organisational context has a predecessor and a successor. Therefore, being located or positioned in a role entails certain obligations, duties and reciprocity in behaviours as expectations from the predecessor or successor, which in turn builds and strengthens identity of individuals. The questions: How do we as HR professionals view these different facets of generational identities? How do we build systems that strengthen inter - generational identities within the organisation?

Conclusion

"There is a critical difference between merely having diversity in an organisation's workforce and developing the organisational capacity to leverage diversity as a resource"[25]. While the academic literature focuses on the challenges of multigenerational diversity at workplace, there is a need to find remedies of managing such diversity and leveraging on it to enhance the effectiveness and productivity of the organisation 9,25. The generational conflict existing within an organisation, can be seen as a source of frustration for the leaders, if they perceive or see these differences as potential problem areas[15]. A better understanding of the wants and needs of different generations, will help the organisation to create processes that can manage and reconcile these differences 1.25 and will help in providing opportunities for positive change and innovation 29. Designing motivation systems, reward and compensation programs, trainings to suit learning styles of each generation, open and on-going discussions help in effectively managing multigenerational diversity. It has been found that learning is maximum when different generations work together and the quality of work improves[38]. The challenge for HR professionals is in building this synergy.

Since the phenomena of generations is nascent and evolving in the Indian context, there is an opportunity for HR professionals to engage in reflective practice, which will help build the theory of inter generational collaborations at workplace from the "inside". There is a need for robust theorisation, which is based on practice as experienced by professionals in organisations.

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Erratum : We regret that there was printing error in the article of Dr. S Ramnarayan and Ms. Neha Gupta in the July 2011 issue. For the correct and full article, please contact Ms. Neha on : Neha_Gupta@isb.edu

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GETTING HR READY FOR GEN Y

COL Dr R M NAIDU and Dr MEERA NAIDU

Abstract

Fortune deemed Gen Y as the highest maintenance, yet potentially the most high-performing generation in history because its members are entering the workplace with more information, greater technological skill, and higher expectation of others & themselves than prior generations.

This article discusses at length about the genesis of the Gen Y phenomenon, how their upbringing has shaped their view of the world and of themselves. As these millenials are entering the workforce in large numbers, a number of HR dimensions like Recruitment, Organizational Policies, Mentoring need to keep pace.

About the Authors

Col. (Retd.) Dr. R.M. Naidu, Ph. D. is presently a Professor with Siva Sivani Institute of Management, Secunderabad. A product of Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune.

He has over 25 years of experience in the Indian Army as also about 11 years of industry/academic experience.

Dr. Meera Naidu is a Senior Faculty in Commerce. She has over 20 years of academic experience. She has contributed a number of papers for various journals.

Introduction

From their preference for multi-channel delivery, to their demands for ease and convenience; the needs and behaviours of Generation Y are undeniably influencing the industry. And while some institutions embrace the opportunities brought about by this younger generation, others continue to write them off as an irrelevant segment of the market, regardless of where you stand, their ultimate impact on products, delivery channels and marketing efforts inevitable.

There's much speculation and conversation these days about Gen Y (or the millennial generation). Who understands them, how do they work, what makes them tick, and how do managers manage them? Much of the conversation is centered around the basic idea that this generation is

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fundamentally different and that "we" don't get them yet". Gen Y'ers are not fundamentally different; there is an argument to be made that each new generation causes the prior generations some distress. Each generation seems to go through the same growing pains, has different learnings to use, different technology at their hands, but these factors probably have existed since the dawn of work. The effect may simply be increasing over time as changes accelerate, causing us more visible angst than deserved to be noticed before.

Generation Y (Gen Y) is generally considered to be those individuals born sometime between the early 1980's and themed 2000's; and, at some 75 million strong, they simply cannot be ignored. Within the next ten years, this extraordinarily diverse market segment is projected to become more powerful than any generation before it, and as a result, today's institutions must address the issue of targeting Gen Y in planning for long-term growth.

This generation is known for their sense of entitlement, outspokenness, inability to take criticism, and technological sophistication. Fortune deemed Generation Y in its May 28, 2007, issue the most high-maintenance, yet potentially most high-performing generation in history, because its members are entering the workplace with more information, greater technological skill and higher expectations of themselves and others than prior generations. In addition, Time described members of Generation Y in its July 16, 2007, issue as wanting the kind of life balance where every minute has meaning. They don't want to be slaves to their jobs the way their Baby Boomer parents are.

Like it or not, Generation Y is your fickle new talent pool. To attract the workforce from this generation, an organisation needs to understand what makes them tick and how to work with its members to bring out their high potential. They may require a lot of management, but they're worth the effort. Statistically, Millennials are the most pluralistic, integrated, high-tech generation in history-traits that make them ideally suited to our increasingly demanding, diverse and dispersed global workplace. They are well positioned to address the global issues of our time, inclined as they are to seeing the world as a vast resource of connection, knowledge and community. In addition, they are smart and driven to make a difference. They demand fast-track career positioning, greater work-life balance, positive feedback, training and cutting-edge technology. By challenging workforce conventions, Generation Y offers us a long-overdue reality check on the shortcomings and hypocrisies of the workplace that may ultimately change it for the better.

Genesis

A generation is shaped by the events and circumstances its members experience at certain phases in life, beginning with childhood. Common generational traits initially develop as a result of social attitudes toward children and child-rearing norms at the time.

Generation Y kids were born when there was tremendous reinvestment in childhood development along with an increase in parental involvement in their children's daily activities. Millennials have been growing up with fully scheduled lives, moving from one adult-led activity to the next. The parents of Millennials continue to play major roles in the lives of their children as they enter adulthood. This trend is best exemplified by the phenomenon of "helicopter parents"-those hovering, intervening moms and dads who ensure their children receive coaching, help

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with college essays and job applications and maintain pressure on educators and employers to advance their children's interests.

Generation Y is also the product of the self-esteem movement that infiltrated public schools in the 1990s and proclaimed all children winners. Members of Generation Y have repeatedly been told they are special. They have received high doses of acclaim for all activities in which they participate, and thus tend to rely upon external praise from authority figures (parents, teachers and bosses) to encourage their efforts and validate their accomplishments. Raised under the shadow of Baby Boomer idealism, Millennials have been taught they can make a difference. Millennials are entering the workplace with a strong sense of civic investment and social responsibility and expect the same of the organisations they work for.

The HR Dimension

Recruitment

A recent study discussing strategies to attract and engage Gen Y employees suggests that there are four characteristics that can serve as a guide for organisations targeting Gen Y. These characteristics reflect the needs and values of this group and include: flexibility, balance, respect and accessibility. These four characteristics will be a starting point in assessing how attractive your institution may be as a place of work for Gen Y.

With members of Gen Y in the team, it is possible to begin creating a multi-generational perspective within your institution by including Gen Y employees in your decision making process. This generation brings a unique perspective to the table and can provide great insights relative to your local market, the perceptions and preferences that younger customers have and about organisations with which you may consider partnering.

Hiring Gen Y employees is many a times considered to be as difficult as attracting Gen Y customers. In addition to making internal changes, there is a need to adapt the recruiting process to target this group. Rather than placing ads in a local paper's employment section, you may find that an online job board, local business school career fair or word of mouth referrals are more effective tools for recruiting Gen Y. Furthermore, institutions looking to become a more attractive employer may consider outlining individualised career paths for younger employees, rethinking traditional job titles - which tend to be more rigid, encouraging teamwork and mentor relationships and creating a sense of purpose for their work.

Becoming an employer of choice for Gen Y may be a difficult task for many companies, however, think about how Starbucks continues to attract younger employees. Starbucks has created an attractive environment that appeals to Gen Y's needs and preferences - flexible hours, casual dress, variety of multi-tasking assignments and an acknowledgement of individuality. They have found a balance in becoming an attractive place of work for younger people, while still appealing to their target customers and continuing to offer their unique value.

Collaborative Work Environment

Generation Y's strength is its technological sophistication. Digital communication is Generation Y's birthright. Members grew up in an on-demand world where access to information is immediate. Technology has been and remains an integral part of their daily lives, including their relationships. Thus, they possess the tools and savvy needed to work with the

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information systems running companies today and to address the challenges of working in virtual teams on complex problems. Raised to be team players, Millennials are well suited for collaborative work environments.

Set Clear Guidelines

The high degree of adult oversight and praise members of Generation Y received as children has left them reliant upon external direction and regular appreciation from authority figures, such as parents, teachers or supervisors. When confronted with unclear guidelines or minimal management, Millennials tend to flounder. They're unable to determine on their own the direction they need to take. They expect others with more authority to give it to them. Left to figure things out on their own, Millennials may resort to entertaining themselves until told otherwise or sticking to lesser tasks that lie within their comfort zones. As a result, Generation Y is struggling as it enters a workplace where employees are expected to hit the ground running with little oversight and to learn on the job.

The upbeat, civic-focused, self-centric Generation Y attitude is beginning to manifest itself in the workforce. As new recruits, the members exhibit a high degree of ambition and entitlement: They expect and demand career track positioning, time to pursue volunteer interests, attentive management from supervisors and regular appreciative acknowledgement even when their work doesn't merit it. Because they have been over praised and protected from feeling unsuccessful.

Life Styles

Employers have noted Generation Y's distaste for working late nights, long commutes and any other "face time" expectations that are not backed by a strong rationale. They want a workplace that accommodates their desire for balance between professional and personal pursuits and their need for organisational structure, adequate direction and acknowledgment.

When you stop to think about it, is there anything inherently wrong with their workplace expectations and demands for meaningful jobs and socially responsible employers, for attentive supervisors who give clear direction and appreciate a job well done, and for healthy work/life balance? We could all benefit from Generation Y's expectations of the workplace.

Amid the challenges this generation presents to employers', lies the possibility of a vital new workplace paradigm. We just have to respond to their needs with the proper organisational policies and structures.

Organisational Policies

Knowledge-based industries should consider organisational policies that allow for flex-time, telecommuting, volunteer service and career incentives that permit talented and competent candidates to advance quickly within the corporate ranks.

Support the technology they use in their personal lives. IT departments currently struggle with the management and security risks posed by consumer technology entering the workplace. This challenge will only intensify as more Millennials enter the workforce. IT departments need to work out how to accommodate these new technologies, because Millennials gravitate toward organisations that harness the best information technology and want access to the hardware and software they use in their personal life.

Commit to socially responsible causes. Due to their civic orientation, members of Generation Y will be attracted to

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organisations that are not solely focused on profits and corporate success, but that have socially responsible missions. They will want to know what their employers are doing to protect the environment, promote social justice, maintain meaningfully diversified workforces and support global responsibility. They may be reluctant to work for companies doing business in countries with questionable human rights track records like China and Sudan. They will want to see a real commitment to socially responsible causes, not just lip service.

Mentoring

Every work environment is different. From CRM to ERP enterprise tools can be tricky to use and the Generation Y on the most part has no interest in using them. Just as one would need to gauge the mood before cracking a dark joke, the technological feel to a workplace can be daunting and unnerving. To bridge the gap, 'middle ground' needs to be established between an experienced member of the team and the newcomer to overcome the teething problems, inevitably found, in the introduction of a new person to an older technology. Studies show 70%- 90% of workplace learning occurs through mentoring and informal on-the-job training.

Mentoring accelerates career progression, acclimatises new recruits to organisational culture and values; and is recognised as an unrivalled approach for transferring organisational wisdom, skills, and abilities from seasoned practitioners to new recruits. Resultant is more effective learning that lessens the agony of trial and error, reduces job ambiguity, enhances job performance, decreases absenteeism and employee turnover. Mentoring has been introduced to groom high-potential recruits. E-Mentoring, despite their propensity for digital connectivity to the world, e-mentoring is not embraced by Gen-Y HR practitioners. Although teleconferencing and videoconferencing afford opportunities for on-line mentoring, it received a chilling approval rating of 18%. Respondents forecast e-mentoring would depersonalise mentor-protégé alliances and learning, resulting in loss of motivation to continue.

Constant Contact:

A recent survey of over 1,000 Millennials showed that over 60 percent of them want to hear from their managers at least once a day. That message is pretty clear: They want to communicate with you often, so make it happen or they will leave! Unfortunately many older generations tend to operate differently. Oftentimes, they have a hands-off approach to management, but this style clearly does not work well with Millennials. Sharing information means that information must be shared throughout the organisation, whether it be financial or production data. It shows employees that they are trusted with the company's information and employees are more able to directly see the results of their efforts. If employees are trained to understand this information, they can contribute ideas that will have a favourable impact on results. Sharing information also spreads power throughout the organisation instead of having it concentrated in the hands of management. This further enhances Generation Y's need to be part of the action. It gives them more power and independence to make a meaningful contribution. Generation Y workers may be able to offer a unique perspective on this information due to their different outlook on the world.

However, those companies that have been able to implement these practices successfully have been able to create a sustainable competitive advantage. Maintaining competitive advantage is

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quite rare in an era where technology is relatively inexpensive and information on competitor practices is widely available. The very difficulty of implementing this system successfully is what makes it so hard for a competitor to copy.

Conclusion

As organisations prepare for the arrival of Gen-Y HR practitioners as the next generation of strategic business partners in our 21st century workplaces, questions bubble about their aspirations and how these can be incorporated into formalised programs. This generational shift is coming whether companies like it or not. The company that starts making changes now to deal with the different attitudes of these new workers will have a leg up on its competition. Practices effective at creating the environment that Generation Y workers expect, due to the competitive advantage this strategy provides, just makes good business sense.

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INSIDE THE MINDS OF THE MILLENNIAL

(Are we Gen Y ready in terms of our Policies, Process & Workplace Practices)

K SRINIVASA RAO

Abstract

Gen Y has often been misunderstood because of lack of information on their aspirations, priorities etc because of lack of real time data in Indian ecosystem. The research aimed to understand more in depth some of the common understanding of Gen Y and draw a conclusion on what are Myths and Reality. The research also share insights on what should HR professionals should focus on and why while crafting policies and practices.

About the Author

K Srinivasa Rao is a human capital strategist, a Partner at the 'The Strategist'. His earlier experience includes Satyam Computer Services, CATS (ComputerAssociates-TCG), Baan Info Systems, Ernst & Young and Videocon International.

Background

Gen Y has often been misunderstood because of lack of information on their aspirations, changing priorities and lack of real time data which have implications for HR professionals in their decision making while crafting policies and practices.

The Strategist (Strategist HR Advisory Services LLP) commissioned a research to understand more in depth some of the common understanding of Gen Y and draw a conclusion weather they are Myths or Reality. Some of the broad aspects which were covered in the study were:

- Does Generation Y expects instant gratification only and is not focused on the future?
- Does Gen Y slack off at work to take care of personal matters?
- Generation Y workers can't take direction?
- Gen Y employees have a sense of entitlement and don't want to "pay their dues."
- Generation Y lives in the moment and would rather play than work.

Methodology

The Research design focussed on Gen Y Outlook on life, what influences Gen Y Decision making, how does Gen Y choose a Company, Gen Y and their Leadership preferences, What Motivates and De-

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motivates Gen Y and What are the Work Culture Implications?

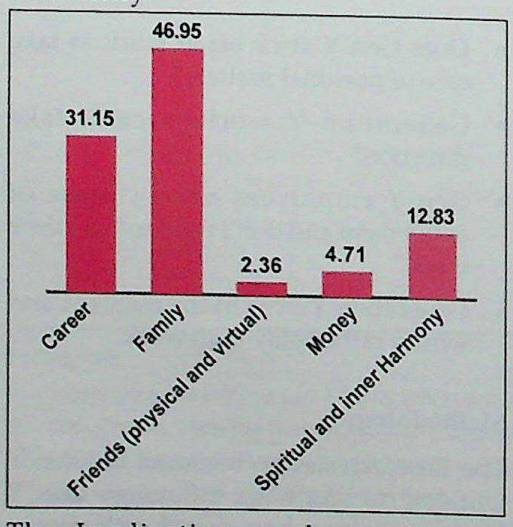
The data sample consisted of interviews with 1124 respondents across India. The respondents belonged to the age group of 23 to 25 years. The respondents came from Engineering and Management background with a minimum of 1 year of experience in corporate setting. One year of experience criteria was mandated to ensure that the responses are grounded keeping in view the realism of workplace and also with an assumption that one year experience would make the respondents more mature in their responses. The demographic distribution included a ratio of 57 : 43 spread over Male & Female and respondent spread across India region was 43% from South, 27% North, 21% West and 9% East.

Major Findings & Implications

Section 1 : Gen Y Outlook

- When asked 'what is the corner stone of their life'?

Gen Y followed by Career, whereas the general myth is Gen Y is all about Friends and Money.



The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are

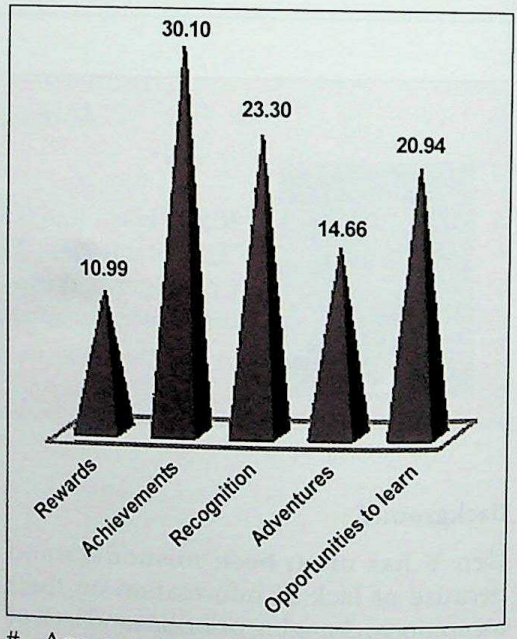
Where does Family stand in the overall Talent Management Strategy?

Is our focus on Compensation as a Gen Y Retention Strategy justified?

- When probed 'what brings great joy in their life'?

Achievements and Recognition gives this generation a high, the general understanding revolved around money and spending time with friends etc.

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



Are our organization's mechanisms capable of creating opportunities for Gen Y to achieve something meaningful in their initial 6 months period or the organizations expect them to 'pickle' for a period of 12 to 18 months before providing an opportunity ?

Do our organizations believe in differentiating between achievers and non achievers and recognize them publically?

Do our organizations believe in encouraging learning among the Gen Y

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and believe it is an investment rather than cost ?

- When probed 'role of ethics in achieving their goals'?

This generation believes in achieving their goals within the ethical framework (moral and legal),

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are

Do our organizations have governance mechanisms to support this group of achievers?

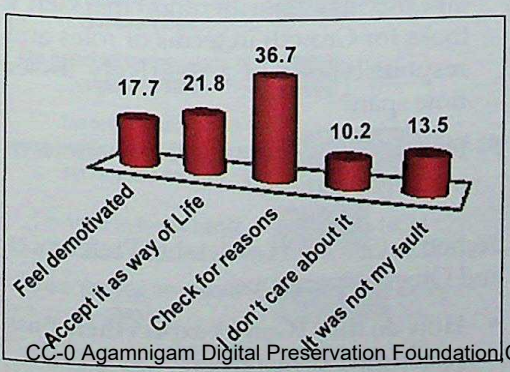
Are we as organizations ready with this kind of transparency in their day to day operations ranging from how we fit new recruits in salary bands, to how normalizations operate during appraisals, how onsite opportunities are allocated? The question to ponder is how well are we equipped on 'Procedural Justice'?

Section 2 : Gen Y on Decision Making

- When asked 'How do they react if they fail in Decision making?

As a rational bunch of people who like to get honest feedback, do not believe in blame game, are ready to accept ownership.

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



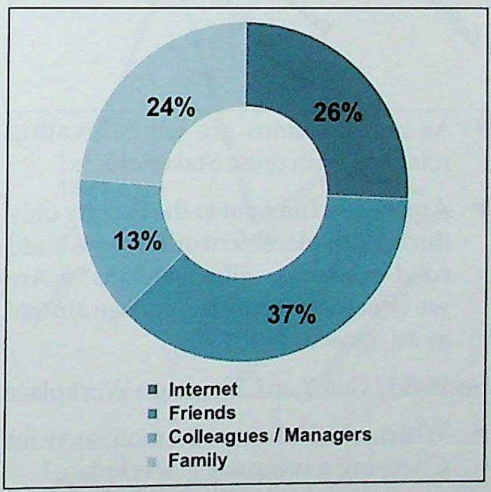
Are our feedback mechanisms geared to deal with this of rationality and openness?

Are our organizational systems and processes transparent and Process oriented to identify the reasons for failure in a process

- **Whom do they (Gen Y) consult in Decision making at work?**

Internet and friends are the most frequent sources of information to solve their problems

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



Do our organizations allow easy access to these sources of information?

Are we effectively using the social media to make our employees productive?

Why are colleagues and Manager not being considered as Source of Information, have we as organizations created some artificial barriers between generations by not facilitating meaningful interactions between them?

- **'Choosing Careers – The Influencers'?**

For the Gen Y community, Faculty and Alumni has emerged the greatest

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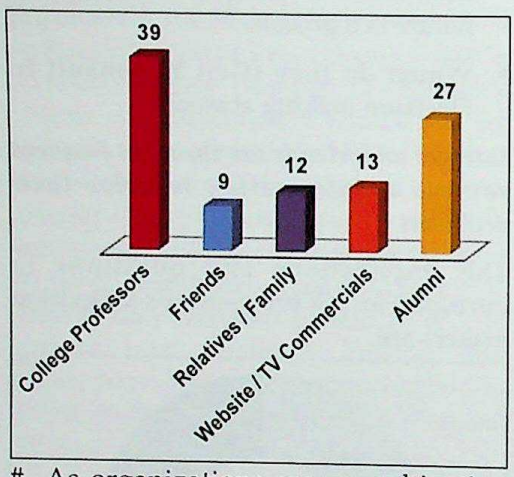
influencers while choosing career/ for career advice a clear shift from relatives and families

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



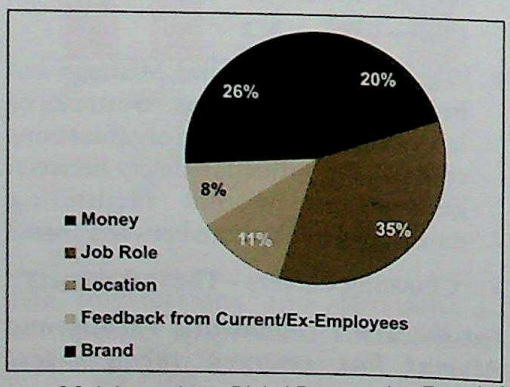
As organizations are we cultivating relations with these Stakeholders?

Are we reaching out to the Faculty only during pre-placement or have we build solid academia –alliance plans # Are we effectively using the college alumni as an attraction strategy?

Section 3 : Gen Y on Choosing a Workplace

- When asked what are the motivators for Choosing a company / workplace?

Job Profile / Role on offer and Brand of the organization emerged as the greatest motivating factors to choose an organization

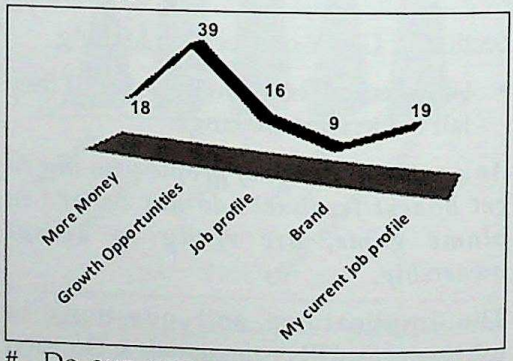


The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are

- Are our attraction mechanisms focusing on Job Profile and Brand as attraction strategy?
- What role do job descriptions play in attracting Gen Y to our organizations? Are we sharing and committing Job Profiles while attracting this talent?
- Are our branding efforts enough to pull this generation to our organizations? Is our branding equipped to attract this talent – for example Is Gen Y is the face of your employer branding?
- **Why does this generation switch organizations?**

This generation wants to grow and perform different roles

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



Do our career management systems take this into consideration that Gen Y looks for Growth in terms of roles and responsibilities in a relatively lesser time span?

Do we have options for job rotations in our organizations?

Section 4 : Gen Y on Leadership Preferences and Other Dimensions

- **How do they (Gen Y) expect their Boss to conduct themselves?**

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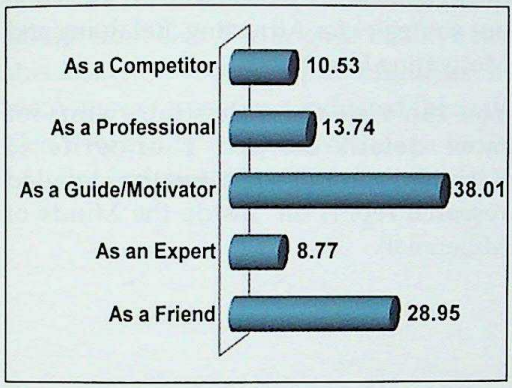
Managers are expected to be their friend, philosopher and guide

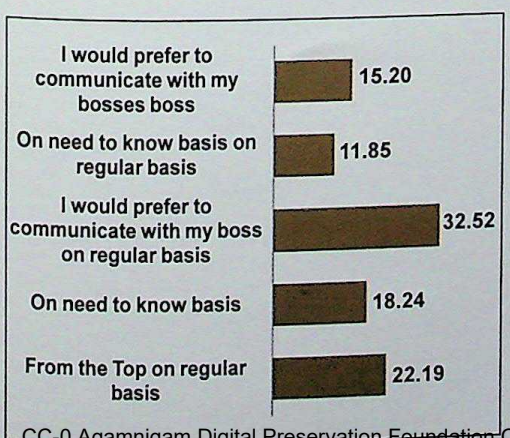
The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



- Are Managers from Gen X aware of these expectations?
- Are managers equipped to conduct themselves on these parameters?
- Are managers rewarded and reprimanded on this?
- **Communication from bosses and organization at Workplace**

Generation Y believes in continuous and open communication.

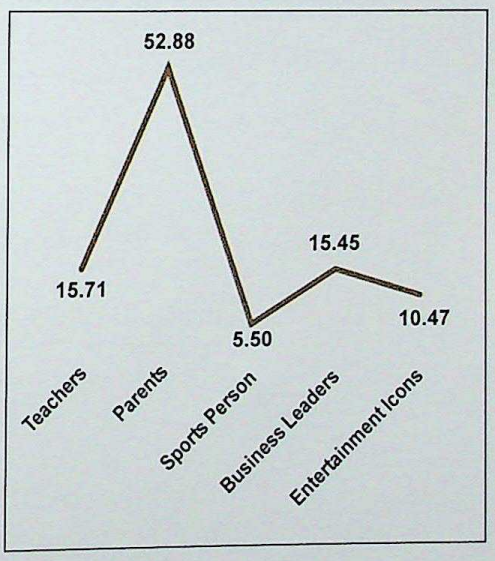
The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are


I would prefer to communicate with my bosses boss
15.20
On need to know basis on regular basis
11.85
I would prefer to communicate with my boss on regular basis
32.52
On need to know basis
18.24
From the Top on regular basis
22.19

- Do our organizations have formal and informal communication mechanisms?
- Are our managers equipped to share and listen?
- As organizations are we ready to be 'Listening Organizations'?
- **Whom does Gen Y idolize?**

Parents are their role models

The Implications and questions to introspect for HR professionals & Decision makers are



- As organizations how much do we know about parents of this generation?
- Do we link this information with the aspirations & engagement strategies fir Gen Y ?
- Are parents a stakeholder for attraction strategy to attract Gen Y?

Conclusion

The Research insights are far reaching both in short and long term and leave us with some very uncomfortable questions-Are we really ready for this new Generation at our workplaces in terms of our policies, processes and practices?

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Coupled with the experience of the Advisory team on these dimensions we believe that the following are the implications and action plan for HR professional and decision makers. In the MUST DO category the organizations need to embark on 'Are we Gen Y Ready Audit' which would focus on People Orientation, Process Readiness and Work Place Practices. Build a strong 'Manager Employee Connect Index' which monitors the sensitive relationship between Gen X and Y. Build a Vibrant Intranet – Web 2.0 which facilitates Gen Y to Blog, write and connect with colleagues in workplace. Reorient the Induction programs into a larger and more in-depth framework like 'First 100 days Program'

The journey has just begun and we believe as organizations we need to re-look into our strategies for Attracting, Retaining and Motivating Gen Y.

You can visit www.thestrategist.in for more details on Gen Y or write to Ksrini@thestrategist.in for the detailed research report on 'Inside the Minds of Millennial'.

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VOICES OF GEN Y : GLEANINGS FROM AN IBM INDIA BLOG

In the context of this journal and as a part of its ongoing engagement with Gen Y, IBM India's Diversity and Marketing functions ran a blog inviting several students and others from Gen Y to engage in a live discussion with its VP and Head –HR (editor of this issue) on several topics of interest like career, technonlogy, work-life integration etc.A survey was alos conducted through the same blog to understand the opinions of Gen Y form different parts of today's India. In this section we have published a summary of what was found and select posts of Gen Y participants

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ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

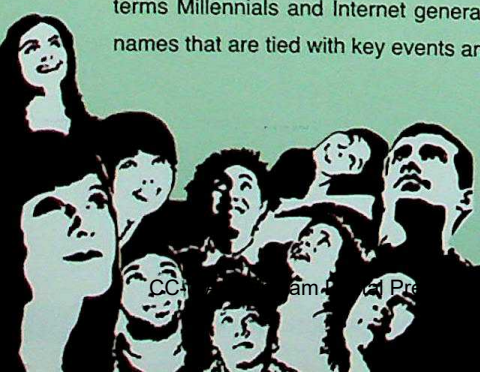
'Share your thoughts. Shape the future' is an IBM led engagement on social media with Gen Y through a 3 week - long campaign, immediately preceding the launch of the Q4 issue of the NHRD Journal. The engagement was specifically deployed to gain insights from Gen Y on two key discussion themes: 'Impact of Technology & Social Media in the Workplace' and 'Careers & Leadership Styles of the Modern Workplace'.

ABOUT GEN Y*

The term Generation Y appeared in an August 1993 magazine AD Age editorial to describe those children born between 1981–1995. The scope of the term has changed greatly since then, to include, in many cases, anyone born as early as 1981 and late as 2000. Generation Y are primarily children of the Baby Boomers and Generation Jones, though some are children of older Gen X adults.

While Generation Y alludes to that cohort's successive relationship to Generation X, the term Echo Boomers is used to allude to the generation's close tie to the primary childbearing years of Baby Boomers; the term Second Baby Boom is also used in this way and to denote the population expansion that Generation Y represents. The terms Millennials and Internet generation ("iGen") are attempts to give the Gen Y cohort more independent names that are tied with key events and cultural trends that are strongly associated with the generation.

Source: The Gen Y Encyclopedia



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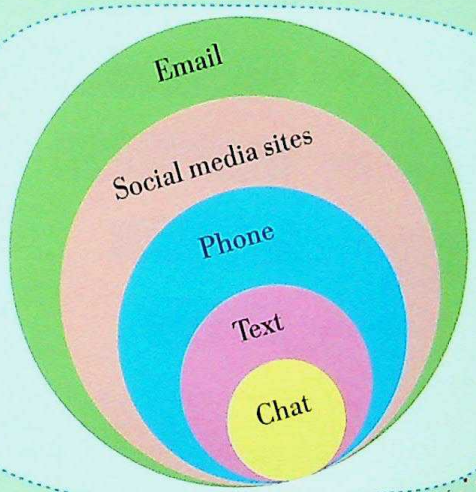
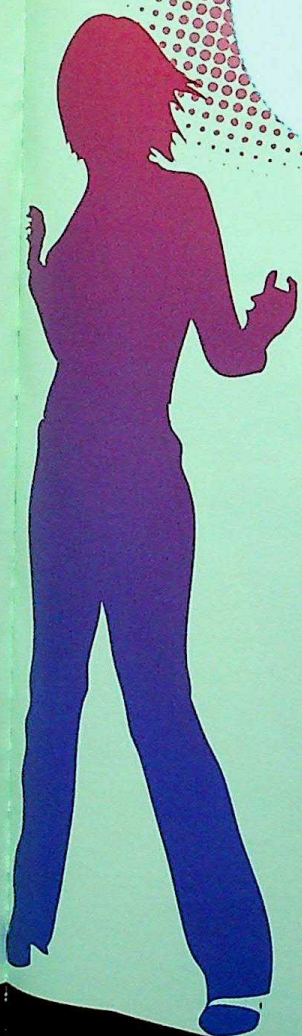
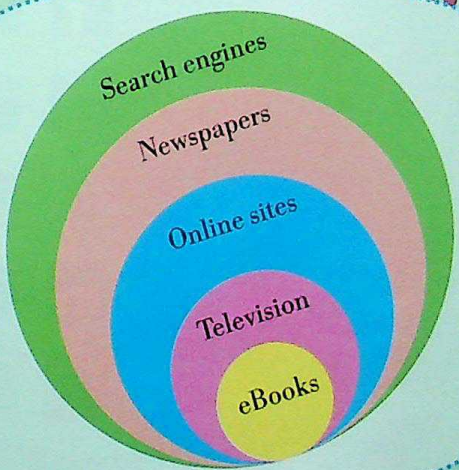
IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE WORKPLACE

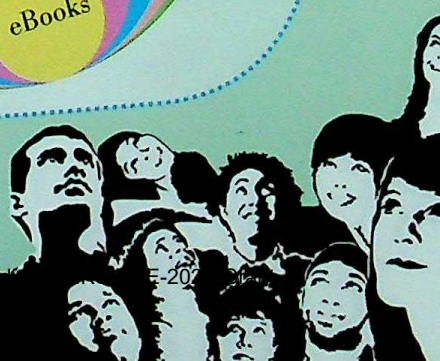
What is your preferred means of communication?





What do you rely on most for information?





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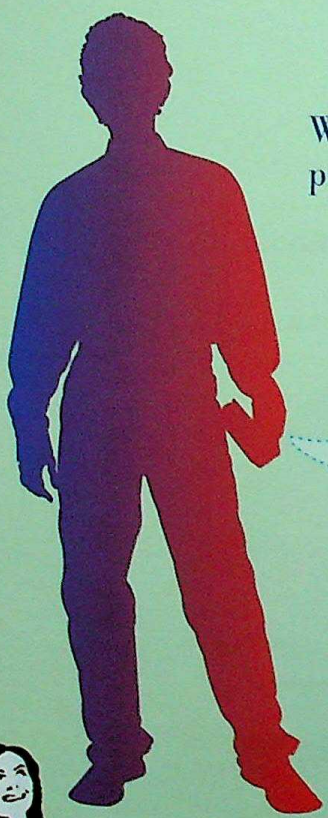
What drives you to social media sites?

- Networking
- Friends interaction
- Career prospects
- Fun aspects
- Work related



Which social network site do you prefer to use professionally?

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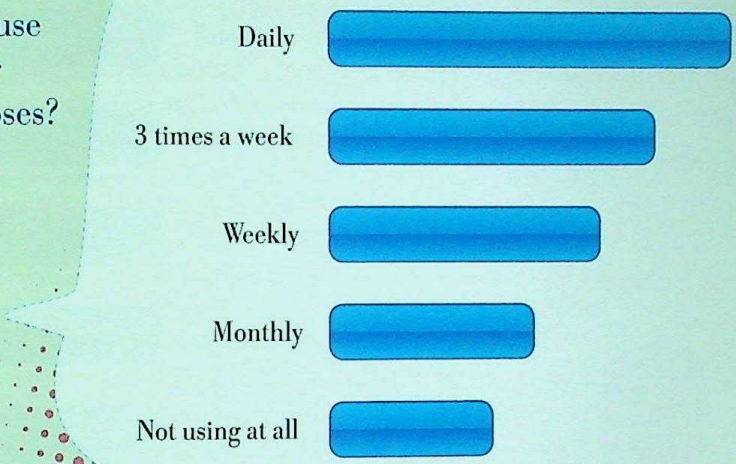
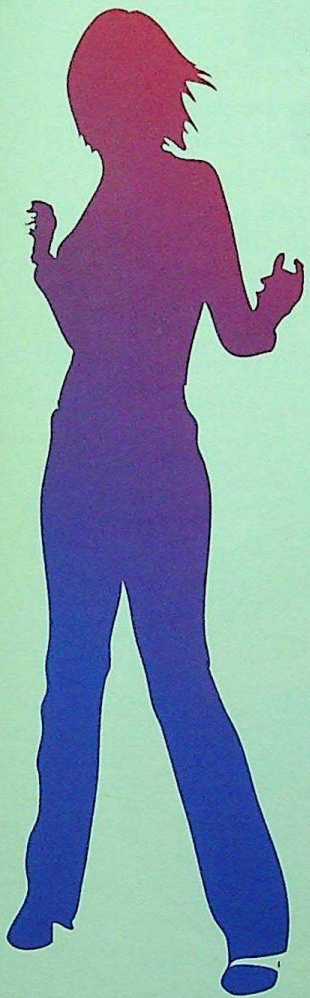
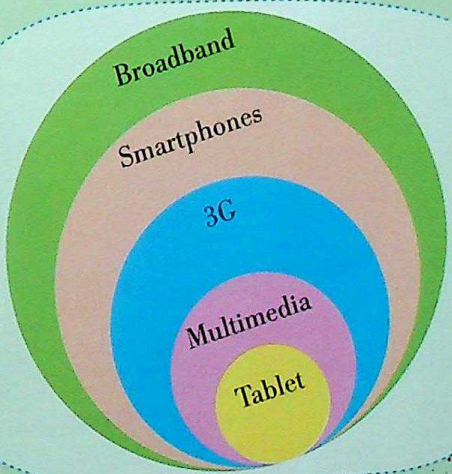
How often do you use social networks for professional purposes?





What makes your life easier at work?



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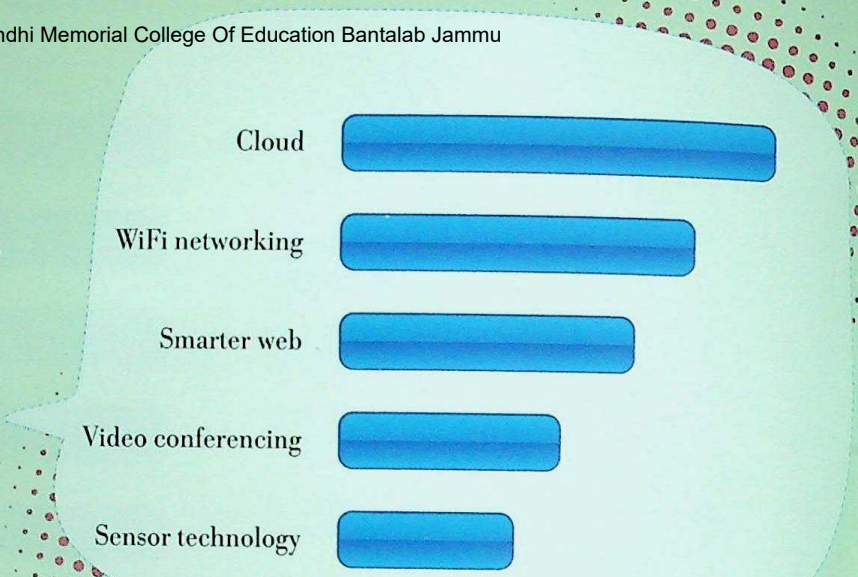
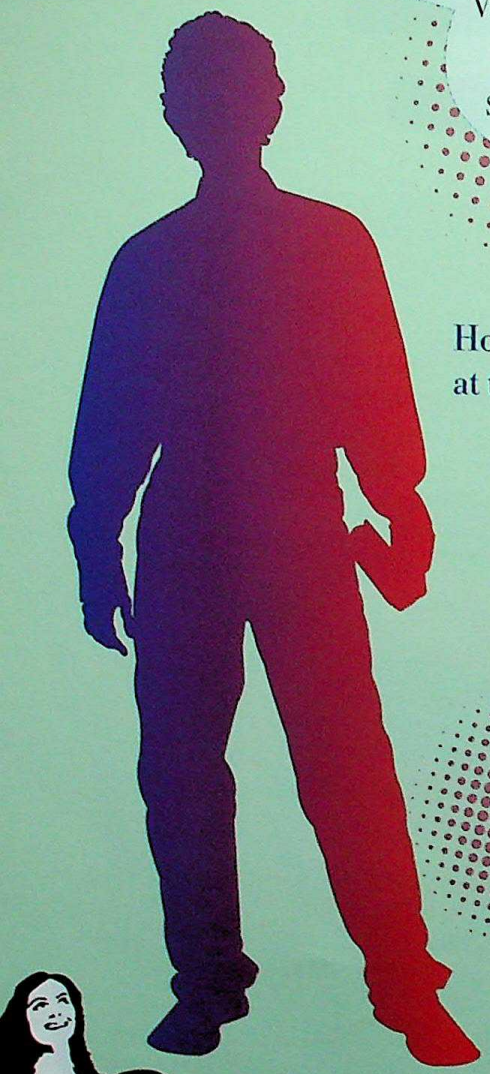
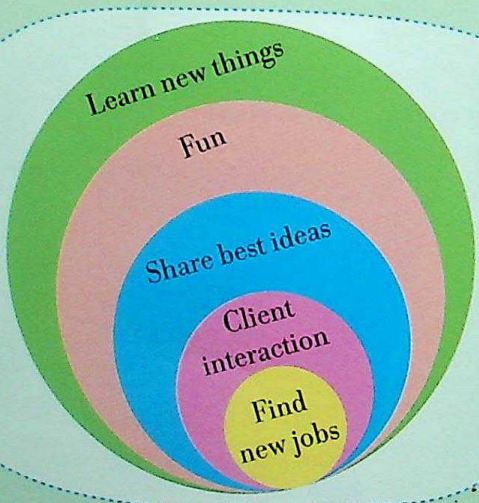
Which technology can bring a new dimension to the Indian workplace?





How can a social media site help you at the workplace?



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DISCUSSION THREADS

Do you think companies should use social media at work?

"Social Media helps in two way communication between the customer and the company. Hence it is an effective feedback channel and therefore deserves a chance." ***DHIRAJ JAIN***

Is there a need for technology & social media policies at the workplace?

"It entirely depends on your field of work. If your work really demands keeping yourself abreast with the activities and norms of social media, it is very essential." ***APEKSHA SHARMA***

Do you need training to use social media effectively at work?

"Social media is a dynamic and an ever changing medium due to which any kind of training become obsolete within days. Constantly tracking, understanding trends and radical "free" thinking would help in using social media effectively." ***GIRISH KHANNA***

Can social media be used for decision-making? Or, should they be used only as discussion forums?

"Either ways. Depending on the need and the communication you got to make. However, today social media helps a lot in getting better insights to enhance decision making." ***ARJUN SATISH***

Does technology increase efficiency and facilitate work life balance or does it get you hooked to work?

"Any coin has two sides. Technology can be used to shape the organization in a cost effective manner. For example, it can be used to reduce hiring cost in organization, building network etc. Talking about work-life balance I think it does not make a large difference. Work-life balance largely depends on the culture of the organization and most importantly how we maintain it." ***DIPIKA DIP***

Do you think social media will make people non-social, lonely and in the long run incapable of interacting with people except virtually?

"It does make a person isolated. And people should realize that there's no substitute for face to face meetings." ***LAVINA HIRANANDANI***

Can social media be attributed to loss of productivity at the work place?

"In totally unrelated jobs it has an adverse effect." ***SAURABH RAI***

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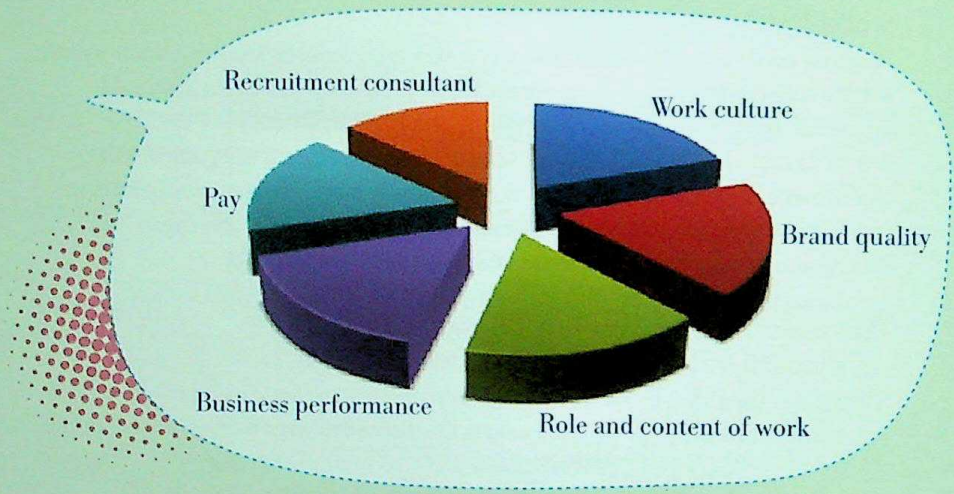
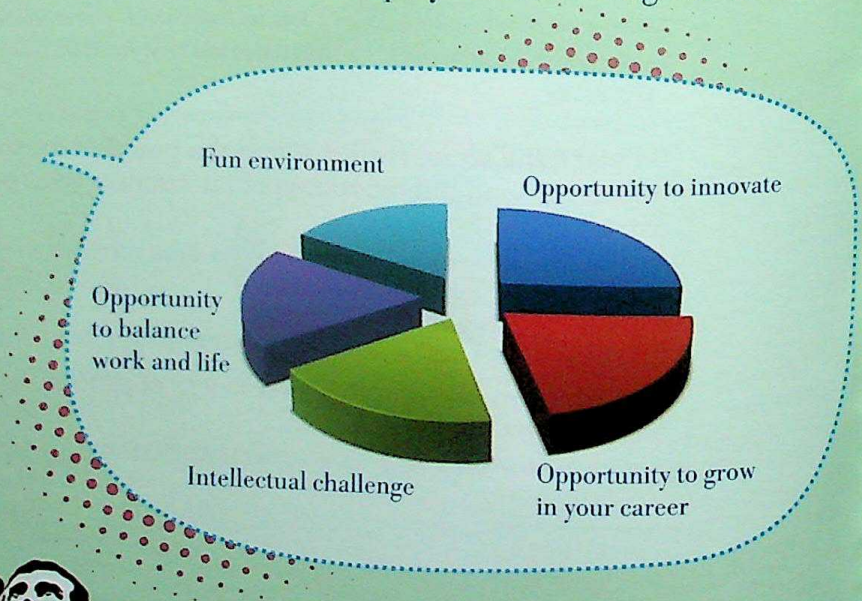
CAREERS & LEADERSHIP STYLES OF THE MODERN WORKPLACE

What motivates you to join an organization?



What are your expectations as an employee from an organization?



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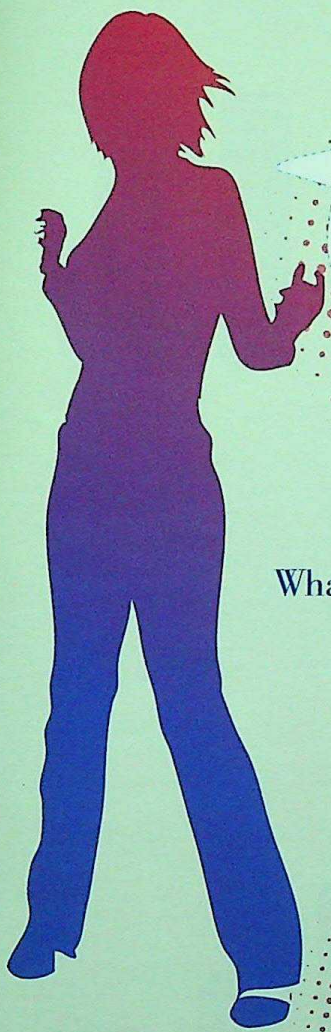
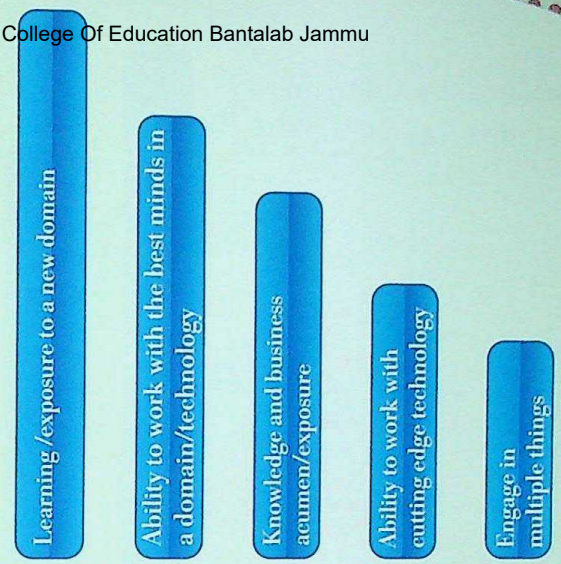
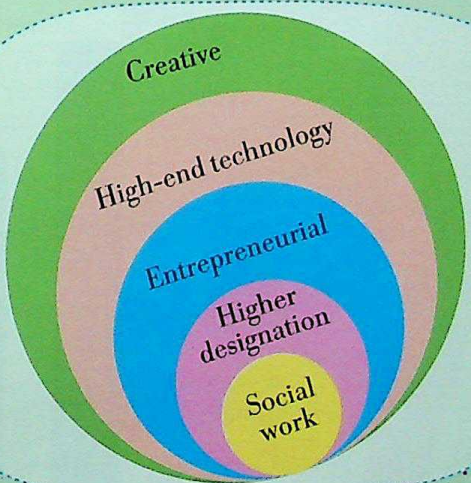
How will you benefit from your next opportunity?




Learning /exposure to a new domain
Ability to work with the best minds in a domain/technology
Knowledge and business acumen/exposure
Ability to work with cutting edge technology
Engage in multiple things

What type of job do you seek with your next employer?



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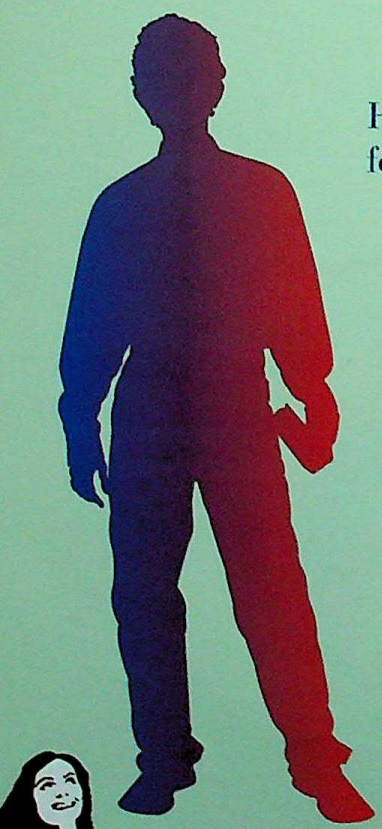
What do you want to do in the next 5 years?

- Be a recognized subject matter expert in my area of work
- Become a people manager in charge of large teams
- Get loads of money
- Do a job abroad
- Join an NGO

How would you like to be recognized or rewarded for your contributions in the workplace?

- Opportunity to showcase your 'product/idea' in the company leadership forum
- A spot bonus
- A trekking/ holiday package
- A new tech – gadget
- A stretch project



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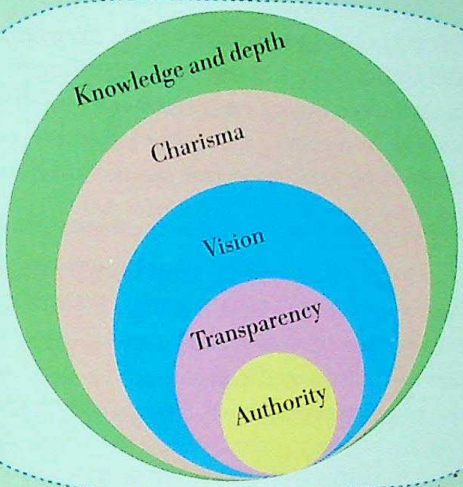
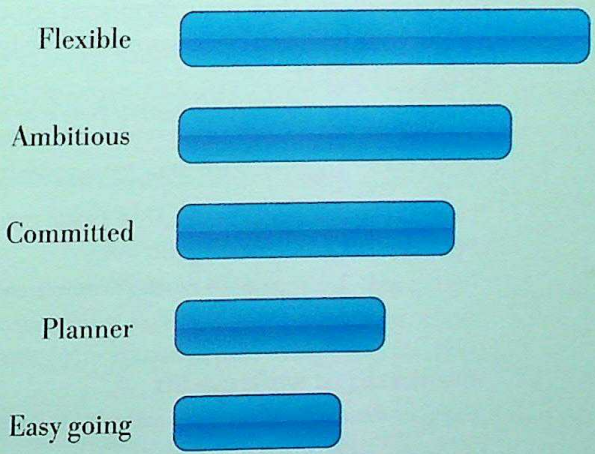
What's the best trait of a leader?



How will you describe your work style?



Infographics represented in the study are the visual representations to draw conclusions about views and opinions from 943 Gen Y respondents, as on 10th September 2011. However, they do not hold any statistical information relating to the numbers of the given responses.

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DISCUSSION THREADS

Will you change employers for an opportunity to learn new skills and build your career vs a significant salary hike or promotion?

"Career is a long journey and that initial years should definitively be focused on skill honing and knowledge up-gradation, which in later stages will not only fetch perks, salary increment and promotions, but also the intangible gain of enjoying your work due to the proficiency that you would have developed in it." ***SAURABH RAI***

How important are flexible work options to you?

"Flexible working hours, I feel, is definitely a great advantage given to an employee by the company. If the work deadlines are getting met, then why judge an employee about how many hours are put into work. Working smart is the order of the day. If extra hours can be used to finish some other commitments, then why not?" ***SUMANA KRISHNAN***

Do you think friends at work are key motivators to stay in or join an organization?

"A negative environment is detrimental to performance at work but on the flip side is disproportionately positive. A good work-group not only motivates you but also brings a sense of disciplined informality where cross functional knowledge/information sharing is optimum which leads to both smoothness and creativity in performance." ***SAURABH RAI***

Do you believe that your manager should provide feedback about your performance spontaneously and informally, every fortnight?

"No, but I expect an appreciation whenever there is an improvement in my performance." ***VIJAYASRI***

"I would describe an effective boss' management/leadership style as..."

"The one which gives you ample freedom to explore and do the things on one hand, but monitors your performance and gives you timely guidance on the other." ***ADITYA TOMAR***

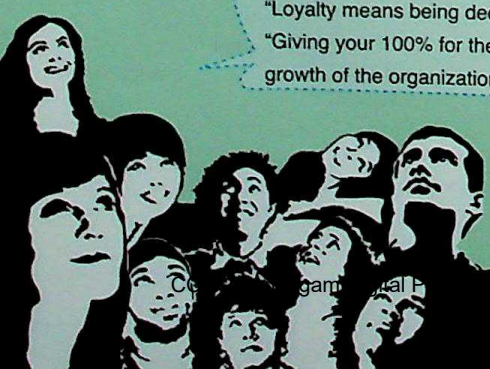
"Mentoring at work means..."

"Giving advice or help in the work to reduce the chances of failure or doing work in a better way." ***ISHA SINGLA***

"Loyalty to an organization means..."

"Loyalty means being dedicated to work and respecting organization rules." ***AVINASH JHA***

"Giving your 100% for the growth of the company, as an individual always progresses with the growth of the organization." ***DIPANKAR SONWANE***



CONCLUSION

The above engagement corroborates what we already knew, in 'real' terms: that the nature of the workplace is changing as the workforce is getting younger and younger; traditional methods of communication and decision-making are being challenged by newer ways such as the use of social media platforms and mobile devices. Gen Y clearly views social media as one of the most effective ways of communication, decision-making and networking. Web-based information and tools have broadest appeal amongst this segment of the employee-base, it seems. What implications does it hold for organizations? That they quickly need to extend the boundaries of their enterprises to the home and to public places; from a technology perspective, no longer can companies get by managing information within their firewalls. Sophisticated identity and access management policies, cloud-based delivery models and the use of smart devices/video within organizations have become the 'expected' norm – as they are seen to promote closer interaction and real-time collaboration with an entire eco-system of stakeholders, enable faster decision-making and deliver competitive advantage.

What we also learned is that broadly speaking, great places to work, in the eyes of Gen Y, are those organizations which have strong values & culture, brand equity and provide multiple opportunities to innovate. Gen Y value organizations which develop employees' skills for the future offering clear cut career paths and those that allow employees to blend work with a handsome dose of 'life'! They want to be recognized as subject matter experts in their chosen domains, deeply value creativity and innovation strategies and continuously seek to upgrade industry or functional knowledge. Ideal bosses/managers actively help navigate career paths, provide straight, timely & constant feedback, mentor/coach/sponsor Gen Y for key developmental programs, and be comfortable with flexible schedules.

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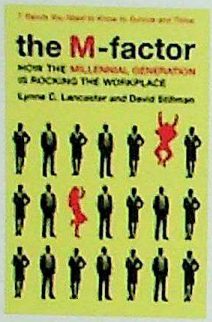
BOOK REVIEWS

1 . THE "M FACTOR – HOW THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION IS ROCKING THE WORKPKACE"

Author : Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman



The "M Factor – How the Millennial Generation is Rocking the Workpkace" by Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman is a witty, observant, and practical guide which aims to ensure employees in an organization who are under 30 years and those over it, at least try to fathom each other every day of the week!

With a plethora of reading material on the "current and hip" topic of generational diversity, Lancaster and Stillman's book treads on no novel or unchartered territory – yet, the book appeals for three reasons - its objective and non judgmental tone in identifying real differences between generations in the workplace; legitimizing the Millennial worldview with a thorough capture of 7 key socio/cultural/economic trends that shaped this generation and accompanied them into the workplace; and, offering the reader real solutions to get our "arms around the Millennials".

Subtly leveraging the metaphor of continental collision, the book calls out inevitable changes in the way all of us - across generations - will work owing to the advent of the Millennials into the workplace (picture seismic collision, shifts, divisions as well as coalescence and collaboration). The negotiated outcomes, the redefined status quo will constitute perhaps another "panagea ultima" or the workplace of the future - who knows?

So, what is the "M – Factor"? These are the 7 trends that Lancaster and Stillman identify as shaping influences on Millennials, which everyone needs to recognize.

a. **Parenting:** Millennials do not just stop with keeping their parents in the loop on careers and decision making, they are "taking them along for the ride".

b. **Entitlement:** Riding high on the self esteem movement, Millennials have a lot to offer but also expect a lot. How does the organization meet and balance those expectations?

c. **Meaning:** Millennials view work as not merely an avenue to earn a living but as a means to contributing to a higher cause – be it an organization, society or community. Organizations need to help connect the dots for Millennials in this regard.

d. **Great Expectations:** Millennials come on board with great expectations for success and fulfillment. At times, they are disappointed by the job experience and hop around in pursuit of the right match. Managers & bosses from other generations have certain expectations from Millennials that often go unmet as well. Such expectation gaps between all generations needs to be bridged and addressed if all need to succeed.

e. **The Need for Speed:** Needless to say, Millennials are digital natives, young and restless with everything they do. How do organizations keep pace?

f. **Social Networking:** The Millennial generation has reinvented modes of communication and redefined parameters of personal and consumer relationships. Information gathering, dissemination and use will never be the same again with the advent of social media. How do organizations balance the need for 'flowing with the wave' & implementing responsible tollgate processes around use of social media.

g. **Collaboration:** Millennials are pushing for new forms of leadership and decision making based on collaboration. How will other generations of workers react to this new way of relating?

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Through case studies, stories and 1on1 interviews ("Millennials on Record") all sprinkled with humour and candor, the authors frame and explain the 7 trends cited above, using the same as a foundation to offer perspective on the world of work through the eyes of the Millennial generation as well as reflecting on the world view of those already on board.

What resonated with me most were two things – the spirit of inclusion and balance that comes through the book – Lancaster and Stillman, self proclaimed "fans of the generations" cleverly navigate away from both the negativity trap ("spoilt, overprotected brats" definition of Gen Y) as well as the cocky "out with the old, in with the new" glorification of them. Ultimately, no one generation can do much of anything alone, no generation is right or wrong, just different, is their thesis. As HR professionals, we need to understand how to bridge the inevitable gaps within a cross generational workforce and leverage the opportunities these 'differences' may pose. Also, as a mother of a Gen Yer, my curiosity on what makes this group tick and what the future holds for them, was ably addressed – not to mention the relief on finding out that my kid was not from "Mars"!!

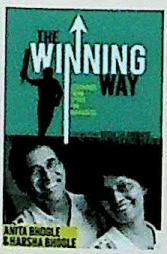
Reviewed by :

Kalpana Veeraraghavan
Workforce Diversity Manager,
IBM - India/South Asia

2. THE WINNING WAY : LEARNING FROM SPORT FOR MANAGERS

Author : Anita Bhogle & Harsha Bhogle

196 Pages, Westland Publishers, Price : 200.



Anita and Harsha Bhogle bring a very interesting book that connects learning from cricket to corporate world. I have heard Harsha Bhogle speak at IIM Ahmedabad where he shared his experience of closely working with players and how their attitude, team work, and passion creates success and also the dysfunctional behaviours that make them and the team loose. The authors have translated such and many other lively experiences and interactions into a well written book. The book starts with a foreword from Mukesh Ambani and ends with a last word from Rahul Dravid. I choose this book to review because it gives what organisations expect from Gen – Y; and also because this is a book that everybody cutting across generations, including Gen- Y would love to pick up and read. The underlying message of the book is a strong focus on attitude, passion to excel, teamwork, and overall self-discipline and learning. The book is full of examples from the sport and one can directly connect with the situations. Divided into ten chapters, the main themes are winning, setting goals, elements of winning, losing – and learning thereof, change, team building, leadership, and challenges in the current world. For a young manager out in the field of corporate world, this book will provide a fantastic read and a motivation to bring that 'A + attitude' to workplace. The book also connects with individualistic behaviours, negativity, poor leadership, and other factors like poor ethics that lead to dismal performance of the team. Overall, this book is a quick and interesting read with learnings that experienced leaders and budding young managers can take away for implementing in their organisation. I also felt this book can be an asset for training managers who can link up the lessons to their training programmes. However, given the background of the authors, they could have made the book more meaningful by attempting to link up the learnings from the arena of sports to real business situations and business leadership.

Reviewed by :

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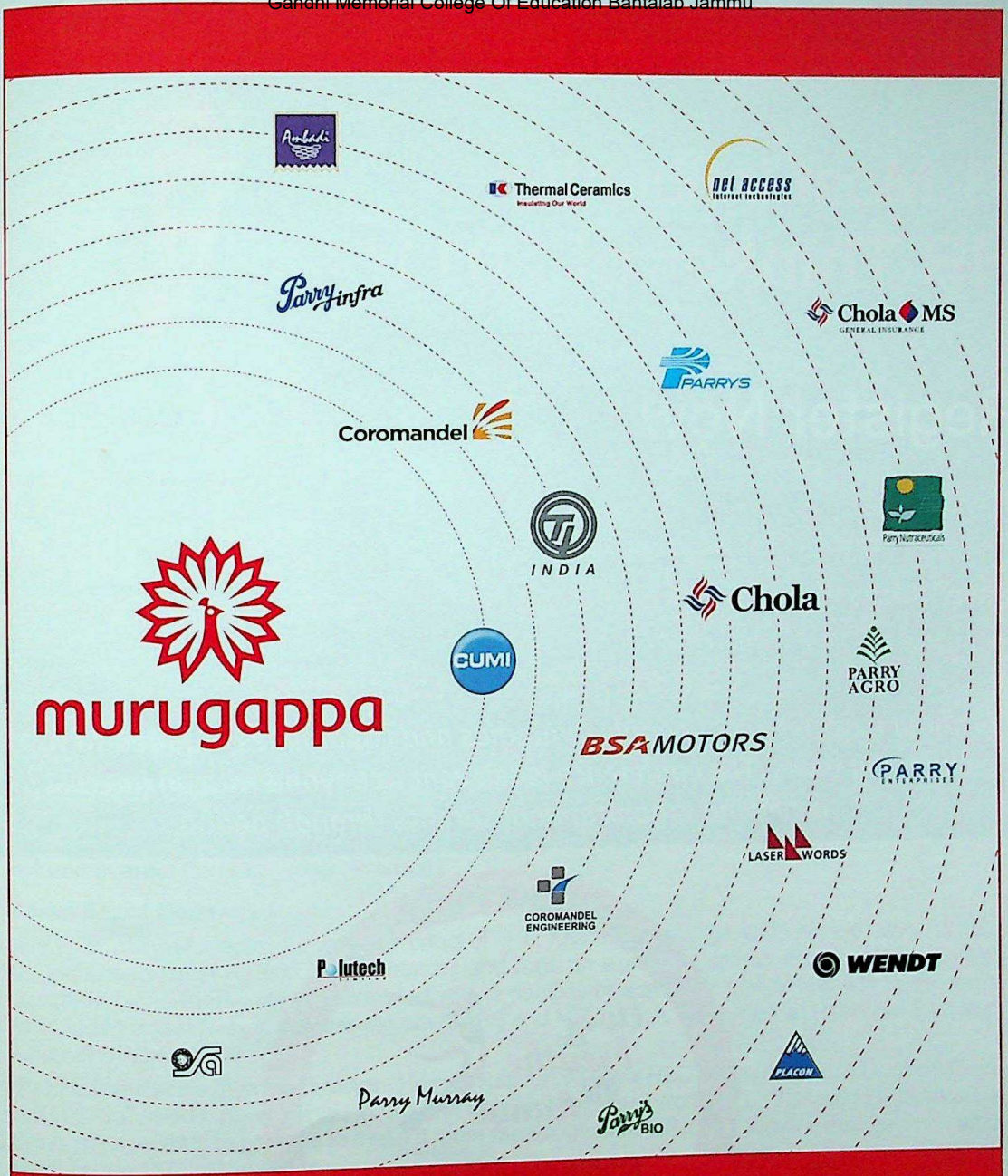

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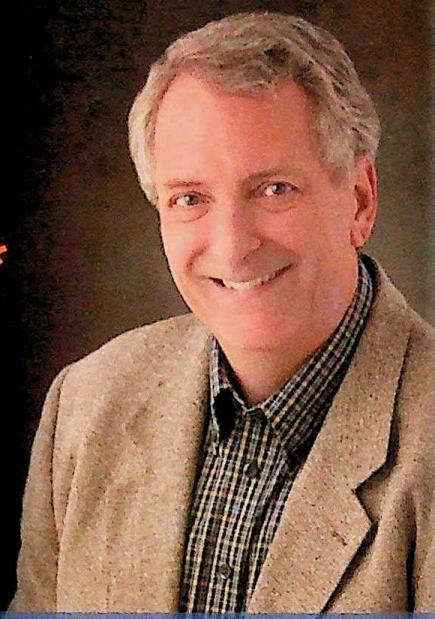

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NHRD NETWORK

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The National HRD Network publishes a semi-academic quarterly journal where in each issue is dedicated to a theme.

The journal publishes primarily three categories of articles :

- Conceptual and research based
- Contributions from thought leaders including a limited number of reprints with due permission
- Organizational experiences in HR interventions/mechanisms

Publications so far include on the themes *"IT in HR", "Performance Management", "Attracting and Retaining Talent", "Career Management", "Organizational Change", "Global HRM", "Women in Corporate Leadership Roles", "Organization Development", "Learning and Development", "Leadership", "Work-Life Balance", "Institution Building", "Coaching For Performance and Development", "Human Resources Management in Rapid Growth Organizations", "HR Competence", "HR and Employee Relations", "CEO and HR" and "People Power – Draw, Drive and Deliver".*

The current issue is on the theme of *"Gen Y and HR".*

The following persons have agreed to anchor as guest editors for the future issues :

1. January 2012 issue by **Mr. Rajeev Dubey**, President (Group HR & After-Market) & Member of the Group Executive Board, Mahindra & Mahindra on "CSR & HR"
2. April 2012 issue by **Mr. Vivek Paranjpe,** Group HR, Reliance Industries Limited, on "HR Challenges in the Knowledge Economy"
3. July 2012 issue by **Mr. Shyam C Raman**, Senior VP HR, Murugappa Group, on the theme, "HR in customer driven economy"
4. October 2012 issue by **Mr. Anand Nayak**, EVP, Corporate Human Resources, ITC Limited, on the theme "HR, the Business Driver"

The following themes are suggested for future issues :

1. HR in Uncertain/Turbulent Economy
2. HR and Internal Communication Practices

Editorial Board Members :

Dr. P.V.R. Murthy, Managing Editor is a product of I.I.T., Kharagpur and IIM, Calcutta with close to thirty years experience in H.R. field. He is founder and runs an executive search firm Exclusive Search Recruitment Consultants. He is associated with a number of academic institutions. He is trained in TQM in Japan and in human processes from ISABS and NTL, U.S.A. He is the Past National Secretary of National HRD Network.

Dr. Pallab Bandyopadhyay is Director - Human Resources Citrix R&D India PVT Ltd. A doctoral fellow from XLRI and AHRD, he is trained in OD and Human Processes from NTL, USA and he believes in applying HR concepts to practice to make it more meaningful and effective. He is a mentor and coach to many young HR professionals.

Dr. Arvind N Agrawal - He is President - Corporate Development and Group HR in RPG Group. An alumnus of IIT (Kharagpur), IIM (Ahmadabad) and IIT (Bombay) with over 30 yrs. of experience. He served as the National President of National HRD Network during the year 2000-2002.

NHRD firmly believes in and respects IPR and we appeal to the contributors and readers to strictly honour the same.

For any further clarifications, please contact :

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National HRD Network

The National HRD Network, established in 1985, is an association of professionals committed to promoting the HRD movement in India and enhancing the capability of human resource professionals, enabling them to make an impactful contribution in enhancing competitiveness and creating value for society. Towards this end, the National HRD Network is committed to the development of human resources through education, training, research and experience sharing. The network is managed by HR professionals in an honorary capacity, stemming from their interest in contributing to the HR profession.

The underlying philosophy of the NHRDN is that every human being has the potential for remarkable achievement. HRD is a process by which employees in organizations are enabled to:

- acquire capabilities to perform various tasks associated with their present and future roles;
- develop their inner potential for self and organisational growth;
- develop an organisational culture where networking relationships, teamwork and collaboration among different units is strong, contributing to organisational growth and individual well-being.

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